

2018-2019 ConnectHome

Strategies for Launching a Strong Digital Inclusion Program, 3/4/19

Veronica Thomas: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm working out in the field today. So if anyone has problems hearing me, just please let me know. I barely heard my introduction. So I didn't know I was up. Topics that I'll be covering today is getting started, building partnerships, and assessing baseline.

One of the things that I think is crucial and key when you first get started or you first find out that you have been awarded this opportunity is to read the ConnectHome's playbook. I found it to be crucial. It's very important to research and to see what others have done before, see what works, what doesn't work, and basically, what would work for your community.

The next step was to assemble your core planning team. For us it was kind of a no-brainer. We have the family self-sufficiency program in place, which is very important to me because that's the main thing that I do, but we have a committee in place that's very, very dedicated and active and I knew instantly that that committee had to be involved with anything that we did moving forward with ConnectHome.

If you want to have a program that's successful, you have to have people that you know are going to do a buy in. That was who we knew who could help, but the next part of it is who will help you. Busy people are busy people. A lot of times you can think of someone instantly that you know you would like to get to help you, but they simply don't have the time or maybe they don't have the resources. But it's important to know that, if you don't ask, you will not know.

Clarifying your digital inclusion landscape. What is your need? For us our need was obvious. We needed devices. We need devices. It wouldn't do us any good to have the internet providers if our folks did not have devices, and we already pretty much knew this. Last year out of everyone that I find adding them to participate in the family self-sufficiency program, not one of them owned a computer, not one, and most of these folks, they wanted to get their GEDs.

They wanted to go back to school. They wanted to look for jobs, but they did not own a computer and certainly did not have access to the internet. So for us looking at our landscape, we knew what our need was, and it's that. One of the things about our area is we have a 12,000-mile square radius, and we have over 1800 participants in our program.

Building partnerships, you have to reach out to the experts. I don't know what I would have done if Maribelle [ph] and Dina, if those folks had not been on the other end of the phone or the other end of my e-mails because, honestly, I didn't have a clue. We got the notice that we had been included in the ConnectHomeUSA program. Now, what do you do? What do you do next? You got the notification. What do you do? Where do you start?

And once again, reading the playbook and reaching back out to the experts. Our FSS partners, I've already said that. We have our FSS board, but we already had the partners in place with companies and organizations and businesses that are dedicated to making our participants in that

program successful. So there was not a reason to think that these people would not want to continue that type of relationship.

The next thing that I did is I looked right at home with DETCOG. DETCOG stands for Deep East Texas Council of Governments, and basically, it's a governmental -- local governmental agency that consists of counties, cities, schools, private individuals, or anyone who wants to pay the membership and join. And DETCOG within itself we have 145 organizations, businesses, cities, counties that are participants in the COG. So looking at the list of participants in the COG, not everyone out of the 145 is in a position to give us cash, money, or donations, but there might be other services that they can offer.

Next is your local banks. Still in rural America you can still walk into a bank and go up to the bank president and ask for things. Fortunately for us, that is still the case in local Texas here where I am, and I've had an awful lot of success with banks. As a matter of fact, when I leave here today, I will be visiting two banks working my way back to the office. The banks, traditionally, they have the community reinvestment funds that they have to give to someone. So why not you?

Local hospitals. Once again, I represent many counties and many cities. I actually have 36 cities that are actually signed up as members of the COG. That's not all of the cities I have. I actually have 150 zip codes that we service. So the local hospitals, they have old computers. Sometimes they may or may not be able to give you funding, but certainly they have other things that they can offer you. They might even have office space or conference room space that you could use to do training classes, to have a meeting to recruit other people. So you certainly don't want to rule them out.

Home health agencies, that's a huge, huge industry here, and the majority of our participants on the Section 8 program that have jobs, most of them do home health. So that is a resource that is very competitive. They thrive on name recognition. So whenever we do any kind of event, they actually call and say, hey, can I come? Please invite me, or we'd like to provide breakfast for that event. So I really rely on them.

Community colleges and universities. I have three universities in our service area, and all three universities are very big and active in the community. Angelina College is one that is the closest to me that they also -- that is also my county with over 944 participants in the housing shortage voucher program. They are crucial and really excited about things that we're doing, which I'll tell you a bit more about in just a second.

Chamber of commerce. Your chambers often will have monies that are available that they can donate, and if they don't have the money, they do offer other services. They can lead you or direct you to other businesses that might possibly be able to contribute to your cause.

County judges. Our county judges are crucial and a vital part of our program. Now, unlike some of the larger cities, our county judges act as -- for lack of a better word, they are our governors over our cities and our counties. They are in charge of the planning commissioners, the roads and the ground, tourism, economic development, the county budget. They have their key on the purse

strings. When we initially got started and we wrote our proposal, I had the support of three county judges. One of those county judges has since retired. The other one was not reelected, and the third one, thank God, she is still in her position. As a matter of fact, I'm in her space today doing this workshop.

Came up with a little slogan. I commute to work and commuted to here today. I came up with a little slogan, a little idea. Went in to say hello and to tell her all the neat and exciting things that she's a party of that she didn't know she was, and I said, hey, I have this idea. What do you think? And the idea was how would you like to be a change in someone's life? Donate your loose change. And there's more to it than that but I said it to her and she was like, oh, my gosh. I loved it. She spun around and she handed me a coffee mug full of change and mostly quarters.

And so I was pretty excited about that and I got her blessing and her support and so I'm off and running. So our county judges are truly our partners in any events or anything that we do in the community, and they are also part of the cause. So they have an investment from their perspective of being at the county level and also as being invested because these people that we are trying to assist and help, these are the folks that voted for them and put them in office.

The next are the realtors. Because we are Section 8, our tenants can live pretty much wherever they want to within our 15 counties, and the realtors, they play a big part of that. A lot of the realtors, they are property managers as well as selling real estate, and I was able to get a donation from a realtor last year for our family self-sufficiency tenant workshop. He actually said to me, how much do you want, as he had his blank checkbook out. And me not being greedy, I said, whatever you feel that you can donate. And he donated the same amount as the bank did and, oh, by the way, no one had ever asked him to donate before for anything. And he was not only happy to donate, but he felt pretty [inaudible] getting pretty excited about it when he saw his name on our tee shirts that we went out and purchased with our own money showing our sponsors of our event.

Landlords. We did a landlord workshop yesterday and we just finished with one just now and we have a really, really big one tomorrow. And landlords, we know how much money they get from us. We don't know how much they get to keep, but that is a resource that you could go to and possibly get someone to participate in your program. If you're not comfortable asking them for money, you can always just come right out and say, can I have your support, and then that opens up the door when they can say, I can support you by buying you computers or I can support you by giving you money or I can support you by giving you my old computers.

And so there are many things that a landlord can do, and once again, most people do not ask them to participate or to donate. The workshop yesterday, when it was over, I made my spiel and it was a small group and a landlord came up to me and grabbed my hand and gave me a creased \$100 bill and said, here you go. And another landlord came up and, he said, I don't have any money today. I will be back on Thursday, and I will buy you a couple of computers. So anyway, I felt like that was a good day, and I'm anxious to count the change in this mug that the judge gave me here today.

Tenants. I don't ask tenants for money, but I certainly do ask them for advertisement. If they are participating in any of our volunteer programs, then they can go back and speak to maybe their employers or other family members or people that they may know that have resources. Bottom line, you really can't rule out anyone that can possibly help you because you never know where your help is coming from.

Cash donations are great, but do not underestimate the value of other contributions. I've already said volunteers, materials, free event venues, free food for your events, free advertising, free transportation. I have an agency that they like to advertise and do things. They've -- he's offered to do any flyers or brochures that I might need. We are -- our convening is set for March the 29th. One of our partners is providing the location for that. I will be coordinating with another one of our partners to bring participants to the event and it's coming together and it's only coming together because we have these partnerships and relationships because, as of now, we have zero funding. We have no money for this program.

Get out of the office. Calling people on the phone, that's good, and e-mail, that's good, but people like to see your face. They want to know who they're speaking to. They want to know who they're giving their money to. They want to put a face to the project, and if you get out of the office and you're excited about what you're doing, they can see that, and they can see your body language. They can see the smiles on your face. They can see the frowns on your face. Excitement breeds excitement, whether it's negative or positive.

Think about walking into a room and being all excited about something and pretty soon everyone is feeling the same thing you're feeling. Also, think about walking into the room and being very upset and angry about something. Pretty soon you got everyone feeling what you're feeling, for the most part. But I'm a firm believer in that. I try to take one day a month and just be out in the field fostering those relationships and partnerships that I already have and creating new relationships because it does take a village to get these programs off the ground. And what I find is that most people really do want to help.

Strong partnerships, that's the key. Have similar interests. Do not duplicate services, and communicate. One of our partners who is a nonprofit that is focused on financial wealth and freedom, they actually start teaching financial management classes to second graders. They have been very successful throughout the whole process -- I'm about to go over my 20 minutes -- throughout the whole process and they have partnered with us and we are actually trying to build our own resources.

That's why we're asking folks for their old computers. That's going to help us to get computers refurbished and we'll be able to turn them right back around and each of those computers to our participants. Right now, our first batch of -- actually, our second batch. Our first batch we were able to purchase two new computers from donation, and now, we're beginning computers from PC from -- PCs for People. Say that three times.

Meet frequently. We have a signed commitment statement. When we meet a partner and we develop a relationship, we have a commitment form that they sign, and on the form they tell us what services that they're going to offer and how they can help us. Track your progress. Share

your success. Give credit where credit is due. It's not about me, me, me, or I, I, I. It's about us, and it takes others to make things happen.

Assessing your baseline, do your research. Surveys should be short. Use large font. Translate it, if necessary, and all of our questions on our surveys were basically yes or no except for when it got down to if they had the internet, who was their provider and how they would use the computer, if they have a computer. Our surveys. We did our first round of surveys October 26 during our tenant/landlord workshop, and that turned out to be pretty good.

We did 109 surveys face to face, and out of the 109, 21 had computers and the internet, four were nonresponsive, but 84 of the participants did not have a computer nor an internet. I was a little surprised with that, and the motivation for them to fill out the survey was we used the surveys to go into the drawing for the door prizes that we were able to purchase completely with donations from our partners and people in the community. And so if they did not fill out the survey, their name did not go in the drawing for the door prizes, and I think I had over 50 door prizes.

Our second round of surveys, we're actually doing those now. We started it on February the 11th, and it will actually go through this coming Thursday. But to date we have done 89 surveys face to face, and we're doing those during their annual recertification. We want -- we need the surveys, and by doing them during the annual recertification, that's going to give us the most bang for our buck. And we're kind of under the gun needing this information.

And we've done 89, and of the 89, 24 had computer and the internet and 65 did not have a computer or the internet. And one interesting thing out of the 24 yeses, there were eight different carriers for that in seven different counties -- not cities but seven different counties and eight different carriers. So you can kind of get an idea of what we are up against as far as getting folks actually connected to the internet. And on the last day of this month we will be doing -- I'll be doing a telephone survey to 18 folks that have been identified as reasonable accommodations, and those are the people who do not have to come into the office for their recertification.

Our survey results. Basically, the majority of our folks, they don't have the internet or access. My recommendation is when you do your surveys and you get this information, you should share your results with your stakeholders and use the results to benefit your ConnectHomeUSA program.

One of the things that has come out of this is the GLO has tasked for -- the DETCOG is trying to get broadband for all of our counties, and they needed a survey. Well, our director had put the survey on the webpage, and I said to him, the people you want to fill out the survey, they don't have computers. They don't have the internet, and, oh, by the way, I've already done a survey. And I also ended up giving them both surveys that I've done to date, and that information will be used by the GLO and the ConnectHome national program. Sorry I went over.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Thank you, Veronica. That was wonderful. I can tell you have a lot of experience building partnerships, and I like to say also that it does take a village to do ConnectHomeUSA well.

Without further ado, I'd like to introduce our next speaker, Michael Strom. He is currently engaged in a nine-month public policy fellowship with Leadership for Educational Equity and is assigned to the Jersey City Housing Authority. Michael has been involved in streamlining the development of the new Resident Empowerment and Community Engagement Department, facilitating implementation of after-school programs at five site locations, and coordinating ConnectHomeUSA initiative. Michael, take it away.

Michael Strom: Thank you so much, Dina. All right. So the two major topics that I'll be discussing today are organizing a local convening and developing an action plan. All right. So I broke down organizing a local convening into six easy steps. Number one, prepare for the meeting. Number two, identify key stakeholders. Three, gather data. Four, design the agenda and execution. Five, follow up and gather participant feedback, and six, reflect on success, challenges, and opportunities.

All right. So step one, preparing for the meeting. First step is really selecting your date and the location. It sounds -- it sounds easy, but it's something that you should definitely take a lot of time to think about as far as when the date is, when the -- when it is the most likely that you can get a lot of people out, and making sure that your location is central. So we picked the Bethune Center in Jersey City on November 9th. It put us on a very tight timetable, but we wanted to make sure that our summit was before other events that were the next week in Jersey City and before Thanksgiving break. So we had in total about three weeks from when we started planning to when we actually did our summit, and so here's how we pulled it off.

All right. So number one, so involved in this is identifying your outcome priorities. We wanted to create momentum behind the ConnectHome initiative, and we wanted to gather stakeholders and address tangible plans. Really, like the previous presenter Veronica mentioned, excitement breeds excitement. We wanted to make sure that that excitement was palpable. So we created an online registration portal. We used Google Forms, which provides a up-to-date attendance list and has an easily editable Google doc or Google Excel sheet. I should note, by the way, if anybody does choose to use Google Forms that sometimes there's the annoying feature of Google asking the participant to create a Google e-mail address in order to use Google Forms. So something to keep in mind but anyone who did have that trouble would give me a phone call and I would edit it myself and add them to the list.

All right. Step two is identifying key stakeholders. We created a list of potential stakeholders which we shared in an Excel sheet with the key members of the team that were involved in preparing the convening. So we created an ongoing list and made sure that we were keeping track of everyone on there.

We wanted to invite notable speakers to present. So the JCHA ended up inviting the mayor, a state assemblywoman, the president of AFTRR, school district representatives. AFTRR, by the way, is the -- a national provider for refurbished computers. We invited some school district representatives, representatives from the public library, npower, which is a local organization that trains veterans and young individuals for careers in the tech industry, and we represented -- I'm sorry -- we invited representatives from HUD and EveryoneOn. Those were sort of the last-

minute contributions, but they really, really tied everything together. We were so happy that they were able to come out.

All right. Step three is gathering data. So we did a lot of research on quotes and questions to provide for the participants. Since this was early on, we did not have a ton of data ourselves at this point on the ConnectHome initiative. If we were having the convening today, it would be a very different story, but at that moment what we did have was demographic data. So we took some time to prepare it into the nice format that you can see on the right to sort of make it really easy to see.

And by the way, I should mention that when we had conversations with T-Mobile representatives later, they -- one representative said he almost cried when he saw this because he was so happy to see demographic data spelled out so nicely. I'm sure that was a bit of an exaggeration, but it was good feedback to hear. We also provided some -- a link to the public housing digital divide data, which ConnectHome has listed, and an infographic on digital divide data within the United States. In the PowerPoint version of this, which was sent out to participants, you can see links to each of these underlined areas so that you can click on those at your leisure.

All right. All right. Step four was designing the agenda and the execution. So we really wanted to encourage audience participation through this whole event. So we used Kahoot to start off the initiative. This is a free game-based learning platform which is a mobile app for iOS and Android or can just be accessed on any browser. Kahoot is really fun. If we have time later, I'll go to my screen, and you can see the Kahoot in action. But kids love it. Adults love it. It's basically an online quiz that you can play right from your phone, and it was a great way to make the data more than just numbers. It made it part of a game, and it made it so that you were interacting with the numbers themselves and it provides a little more weight for the information that we were trying to get out of there. And it was just a great tool to get the audience involved.

Secondly, we asked the audience to stand up and state their name and what drew them to the convening. We wanted to make sure that everybody was addressed and that everybody in the audience had the opportunity to say why they were important to be there at the table.

Okay. Next, we created a digitally advanced presentation. I put that in quotes because we like to use something called Prezi. Prezi is sort of the 3D version of a PowerPoint, and again, if we have a little time at the end, I'll take you through the Prezi presentation. But basically, what Prezi does is it presents everything on the screen, and then it zooms in to different areas so that you get the full picture. So we used what you see on the right, the four puzzle pieces, and then as presenters came up, it zoomed in on each one of those.

So involved in the presentation we had everyone that we invited that we mentioned on the other slide, the mayor, et cetera, every one of them came up and presented as part of this Prezi presentation and really tied it all together. We had it so that these would be -- the three blue puzzle pieces were the three pieces of -- or the three stools of connectivity, device -- access to devices, access to digital literacy initiatives, and access to the internet, and all those created digital inclusion.

So then one of the most important parts of this summit was taking it from the stage to the table, and so we provided group action sheets which provided templates for individuals to talk in their tables about these three different areas, the access to devices, access to the internet, and digital literacy, and hypothesize the best methods for initiating that. And with our group action we actually had -- we actually had experts rotate from table to table to help guide the conversations.

Really important in this process was rehearsal. Before the actual day came about, we used an online platform called Join Me to do screen sharing, and we asked all the presenters to join online and do a mock presentation of the whole event. As I'll talk about later, it would have been nice to have a little bit more rehearsal, especially for the extra volunteers, but this was very key to making sure that the day was a success.

All right. Step five, after the event was following up and gathering participant feedback. So we made sure that directly after the event that we shared results and resources. We created a photo album. We -- and we created a PDF that listed all of the sources that -- so that it could easily be accessed. We also conducted a survey. So we only had about a quarter of the people present actually fill out the survey, unfortunately, but the results were very positive and we were -- we were very happy to see that. And the survey asked what next steps people were committed to pursuing, and so that was a good way to follow up and to see which of the stakeholders are in and basically who are interested in doing more with ConnectHome.

Step six is then reflecting on our successes, challenges, and opportunities. This was the first convening. We had no intention of having it be the last. So really taking the time to see what went well, what could have been better, and where we could have done things a little differently. So we found out through this whole process that finding speakers and the data was basically half the battle.

While it would be nice for me to claim that we had the agenda all spelled out weeks in advance, that was not the case. The agenda really came together based on the speakers who committed to being a part of this event, and it really all tied together nicely. But it was something where two weeks prior to it I couldn't have told you that it was 100 percent complete because we were making sure that we had those last speakers come in and commit to doing different areas of the presentation.

And this kind of leads to the next area, making sure that you have enough time to prepare. So as I mentioned, we were in a very tight timetable, but if you have the leisure of having a few extra weeks, that's definitely preferable, making sure that you have a little time to breathe and to reflect on areas that might need a little more support. Rehearsal is definitely key in this whole initiative, especially with support roles. There were a lot of logistical issues the day of that just weren't really thought about because this is -- this was our first time running an event of this magnitude before.

So as far as where should the sign up table be, what should we do if people come if they aren't listed, things like that that if we had held a full mock rehearsal of the day itself rather than a -- just a rehearsal of the agenda, would have been very good. So I'd certainly recommend, if you

have the time to do a rehearsal with your staff, that you do something similar to that. But in the end it's really important to note that it's okay to be a work in progress.

A lot of the organizations that are coming do not want to see a finished puzzle. They want to see what was shown in that picture before, a puzzle that is not connected at the moment and see how can I help fit this all together. A lot of the organizations wanted to know where the flexibility was and where they might be able to fit in. So if a -- if something is too polished, it might be seen as uninviting, whereas a work in progress allows others to say, hey, they're building this up, and they seem like they need some support. I'm happy to be there to support them. JCHA is gathering achieved convening goals of increasing momentum and bringing together key stakeholders to develop stronger partnership with digital inclusion in mind.

All right. So directly after this convening we began thinking of a year-long action plan for how to develop our ConnectHome initiative. Now, before we created the document which you see to the right, we had a lot of different possibilities that were running through our heads, especially after the summit. Just a lot of different initiatives and opportunities and offerings, and it was starting to get muddled trying to understand where everything fits into the overall ConnectHome mission. So we decided to create a chart to clarify all these options. The chart nowadays is actually twice the size as what you see there, but this was a nice early start to sort of synthesize the different offerings and opportunities and to develop some key initiatives and key tracks that you'd be interested in pursuing.

After that it was really important to create a realistic timeline with existing funding and staff to make sure that you can meet those goals. So a lot of the initiatives that we decided to do had to be shifted based on when staff were there, literally, to pursue these initiatives, especially the development of computer labs and some of the other areas that you see there. And key to that is making sure that your action plan is somewhat flexible.

If you say that you're going to open the computer lab in January but you actually don't get the computers in until the end of January, it's okay to say that you're going to open in February. It's better to do that than to make unrealistic goals or unrealistic deadlines, making sure that you're remaining flexible and that you respond to new opportunities and new challenges as they come about, and that's basically all I have to say about those two initiatives.

Janelle Beverly: Great. Thank you, Michael. Just as a reminder, if you'd like to ask questions, you have two different options. You can use the hand icon in the right-hand navigation panel or you can submit the quick chat in the chat box. Feel free to ask any questions of Michael, Dina, or Veronica. We have about 11 minutes for questions and answers.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: This is Dina. While people are gathering their thoughts to ask questions, Michael, I really loved what you said about people coming to the convening not wanting to see a finished puzzle. That really resonated with me. So I'd never heard that or conceived it that way, and I think that's really a great point.

Michael Strom: Yeah. I forget who told me that tidbit of information, but it -- it really resonated with me and I think it definitely holds true.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Yeah. Because if it were polished, then people would say, well, what's in it for me and how -- I can't really help. Why am I even here?

Michael Strom: Exactly.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Yeah. So I think that's really great.

Janelle Beverly: Okay. We've received a question. The question says, "I'm so excited about the step-by-step for a convening. Will you be sharing the PowerPoint with us?"

Yes. So at the conclusion of the webinar, all of our webinar recordings are uploaded along with the PowerPoint materials to HUD exchange, and so when that's posted, you can go in and download that PowerPoint as well. And they also have the link that both Veronica and Michael have shared with [inaudible].

Dina Lehmann-Kim: It might be a little bit quicker if we also e-mailed it to people. So we can also do that.

Janelle Beverly: Yes. We can definitely e-mail the PowerPoint. It just won't be 508 compliant yet. So if you have [inaudible] that need it in that format, that format will be available on HUD exchange.

I guess feel free to type any of your questions in the chat box or use the hand icon to raise your hand and I will unmute your line to ask your question. Okay. We have a question from Ricole [ph] [inaudible]. So sorry if I'm pronouncing your name incorrectly, but you are unmuted now. Did we have a question from Ricole?

Q: Yes.

Janelle Beverly: Okay. Go ahead.

Q: I wanted to know if Michael can go over step five one more time. I missed that part of the section.

Janelle Beverly: Which slide would that be?

Q: Step five.

Michael Strom: Is this the step that you're talking about?

Q: Yes.

Michael Strom: Yeah. I can provide a quick recap. So following up and making sure that you're gathering participant feedback. So we organized all the photos that were taken in the day into a Google photo album. The importance of that is that it can be easily shared. We actually created a

shared album so that anybody could input their own photos, and we were able to send that out. And then we compiled all the lists of sources that we had the day into a PDF with links so that anyone can access that and click on the links at their leisure. After that we created a -- we conducted a survey, which we gave out to all of the participants to see how the event went.

Q: All right. Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

Michael Strom: Thank you.

Janelle Beverly: Okay. We have another question that says, "Who paid for the convening space, food, and other needed resources?"

Michael Strom: I'm sorry. Could you repeat that?

Janelle Beverly: Sure. "Who paid for the convening space, food, and other needed resources?"

Michael Strom: Great question. So the space itself, that was given to us for free through the generosity of the Bethune Center. We have a strong partnership with them through the city, and they offered to help us out. We actually had a lot of help and support from the -- from Jersey City City Hall in general.

The representatives from the mayor's office were there to help assist in the actual day of. As far as the food goes, we covered the cost of those. We didn't really go overboard. We just provided some basic continental breakfast because the convening itself was from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30. But the overall cost of the convening was in the really low hundreds, \$200 or \$300 total.

Veronica Thomas: This is Veronica. Ours is scheduled for March the 29th, the last Friday of the month, and all of our -- our space is donated. The food will be donated. Basically, everything will be donation.

Janelle Beverly: Great. Thank you. We have a question from Ms. Vivian Crawford [ph]. Your line is now unmuted. Feel free to ask your question.

Q: Question is for Veronica. Wondered if you would please tell what DETCOG is again, D-E-T-C-O-G. What is that an acronym for? I heard you explain it, but I had someone else come in in my office and ask a question. So I'm sorry. I kind of missed what you said before.

Veronica Thomas: Sure. Deep East Texas Council of Government. It's a local governmental agency that was actually started by Charles Wilson back in 1965, and it consists of 12 counties that have partnered together and formed an ad hoc committee that does grants. We do many, many different things, and our regional housing is just one of the things that we do, except for with the housing we have 15 counties that sit as well.

Q: Okay. Okay. All right. And I just -- I'm just trying to get an idea of what it is and the how might that --

Veronica Thomas: Visit our website and visit us on Facebook.

Q: Okay. Okay. All right. I sure will. Thank you.

Veronica Thomas: You're welcome.

Janelle Beverly: Okay. We have a question in the chat box that says, "Does anyone know what week will be the digital inclusion week will be in May?" I think they're meaning to ask what week in May will be the digital inclusion week.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: It's -- hi. This is Dina. It's usually the first week in May. It hasn't been announced yet. So I'm not 100 percent sure, but usually it's around that time.

Janelle Beverly: Okay. Thank you. Any other questions? Feel free to raise your hand or to send a question in the chat box.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Janelle, if we're still waiting for questions, I have one for Michael about the data that you gathered. Did -- it was hard for me, obviously, to see the actual document in the PowerPoint. Was that a combination of data that you collected on your own of your own residents plus HUD data and other data?

Michael Strom: So the one piece of that that I put into the PowerPoint, that was just a survey after the summit that we held to see how people felt it was performed and to ask what commitments they might make towards our initiative. We got about 17 responses, I believe, out of 70 participants. So it wasn't the greatest level of feedback, but it provided us a little bit of information about how the residents felt that it went.

We have since then done other data initiatives. We sent out a resident survey last month which we've received back about 300 to 400 responses for. So that's going to provide a lot more data for when we do our next major summit or convening. On top of that we also now have data from a T-Mobile tablet trial and some other initiatives that we're doing.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Great.

Michael Strom: But yeah. At the time of the convening, the only data that we had from our side itself was the demographic data that we could hand out.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: And that data, how did you gather?

Michael Strom: So that data was gathered through our online systems. We actually had all that in our Elite server. It's a program called Elite that our IT group uses, and they -- we selected the questions that we wanted them to export. They sent it to me, and then I compiled that in Excel.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Excellent. Thank you.

Michael Strom: Of course.

Janelle Beverly: Okay. I think we have time for about one more question. I don't see any hands raised or anything in our chat box. So last call. If you have any other questions, feel free to send them our way.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Before -- as we're waiting, I did want to remind everybody about our next webinar, which is going to be on March 26 at the same time, 2:00 p.m. Eastern, and it's going to cover the three-legged stool of digital inclusion where we're going to hear from two speakers who come from our 2015 ConnectHomeUSA legacy community -- those are what we're now calling the pilot communities -- and real experts in this area. You're going to hear from Bobby Colter [ph] from Fresno and Julian Curtis [ph] from Cuyahoga or Cleveland, and they're going to talk about the three-legged stool, so access, training, and devices and how they provided all of those things to their community. So I hope you'll join us for that.

Janelle Beverly: Thanks, Dina. And we don't have any further questions. So we're going to conclude this webinar today. Thank you for joining us, and we look forward to having you in our next webinar, as Dina stated, in the next month. Thank you.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Thank you. Thank you to our presenters.

Veronica Thomas: Thank you.

Michael Strom: Thank you.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: Thank you. Bye-bye.

Veronica Thomas: Bye-bye.

Michael Strom: Have a great day. Take care.

Dina Lehmann-Kim: You too.

(END)