YMCA East Bay-BBK Collaborative Final Report for the California Emerging Technology Fund
June 2012

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Name of Project: Emerging Technology Plan for Family Inclusion (ETPFI)
Grant Number: 2136738
Start Date: September 2009   **End Date:** June 2012

I.   Financial Summary

- Total Project Budget Spent: $916,084
- CETF Grant Amount: $500,000
- Percentage of Match Funds Raised against Goal ($750,000):   14%
- Cost Per Unit of Outcomes: (Total Outcomes/Total Budget) $916

II.   Project Description, Goals, and Objectives, and Outcomes

Project Description

The purpose of this grant is to provide the resources to the YMCA of the East Bay as fiscal sponsor for the Building Blocks for Kids Collaborative to implement the Emerging Technology Plan for Family Inclusion (ETPFI) Project which will accelerate and improve family access to resources and information to assist with education, health and social service challenges that impact family life. The BBK Zone is a disadvantaged neighborhood with high levels of poverty and crime in Richmond, California. BBK will prototype the incorporation of broadband technology into a strategy of comprehensive, integrated services to transform the neighborhood by changing public and private service delivery systems that collaborate with neighborhood leaders to improve explicit, measurable outcomes for residents. BBK will share "lessons learned" with community-organizations, foundations and public agencies throughout California.

Goals and Objectives Summary

The BBK Collaborative was 100% successful in completing our goals of training BBK Zone parents to become proficient in skills to use a computer and the Internet; in the ethical use of information technology and helping small and micro businesses gain information technology equipment and knowledge. BBK fell short of the goal of increasing the number of students and families who use home computers connected to broadband. BBK was 100% successful in connecting families with computers but have not, as of yet connected families with free broadband. BBK is still engaged in this effort which is summarized below. The goal of having ETPFI participants use broadband technology as a tool for empowerment is 20% complete and still in progress; and, BBK has laid the groundwork for achieving the goal of helping students to acquire and use information literacy skills. Deepening the relationship with the school district will help to move beyond the 30% progress made on this goal. Finally, BBK has made the most progress recently on the goal of integrating public and private non-profit agency delivery system due to participation on with the Richmond Health Equity Partnership. This and additional details per outcome are discussed below.

Project Outcomes Summary

Outcome Description	Actual	Goal	Percent Completed
1. Receive and refurbish 1,000 computers.	1,000	1,000	100%
2. Deliver 1,000 computers to families.	997	1,000	99%
3. Install wireless mesh network.	1	1	100%
4. Provide broadband service to 1,000 families.	62	1,000	6%
5. Deliver training to 1000 BBK Zone families re: identifying resources, researching and exploring using the Internet.	1,000	1,000	100%
6. Deliver parent-child training to 1,000 families.	1,000	1,000	100%
7. Assist 1,000 adults to utilize Internet to identify employment opportunities.	1,000	1,000	100%
8. Improve basic skills of 75% of those with literacy deficiencies.	75%	75%	100%
9. Assist 20 small businesses with computer access and utilization.	20	50	250%
10. Include youth in the training and employment efforts; 4 youth will be trained at Stride Center and 2 will enroll at Contra Costa College IT.	4	0	0

III.   Accomplishments and Challenges

Summary of Accomplishments and Impacts of Project

For years one and two BBK Collaborative had a total of 10 outcomes. We exceeded one outcome by 250%; achieved 100% of 1,3,5,6 and 7; 99% of 2 and 6% of 4. The Collaborative reached 0% of the 10th outcome. In our first year we fell short of all but one of our goals but were able to make most of it up in year two.

Assessment of Outcomes Achieved in Comparison to Grant Agreements

- **Recruitment and Distribution**
  Our success recruiting participants and distributing computers is largely due to us clearly identifying who would have what role in the process; removing primary responsibility of all tasks from one person to 3 people, and agreeing on outcomes and objectives for each role.

Delineation of Deliverables and Outcomes Not Achieved and Explanation

In Year One we fell short of many of our goals and were at less than 50% by the end of the year. By the end of Year Two we had made up many of our goals but still did not achieve our broadband goals in some cases coming in at 0%. Our youth training and development outcomes were also very disappointing in that we had no success with those.

Discussion of Other Positive Results from Project

The major outputs of this project has been raising the consciousness in the Richmond community about the importance of digital access and literacy and providing refurbished computers to over 1,000 families.

- BBK Collaborative and Internet Archive installed a gateway and radio on the roof of the East Bay Center for the Performing Arts (EBCPA) to establish a direct link between the Iron Triangle and Internet Archive's site on Florida Ave. Our Tier 1 location on the roof of the EBCPA will transmit Internet service to distribution radios that will be installed closer to where our participants live.

- To this end, the Richmond Public Library and Building Blocks for Kids (BBK) Collaborative submitted a proposal to the Institute of Museum and Library Services for a National Leadership Planning Grant. Our goal is to create a 21st Century Skills (21CS) Working Group comprising residents, and members of the Richmond Public Library and BBK Collaborative to assess available digital literacy services, identify best practices,

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create a plan to identify user needs, develop plans for becoming more adept in our collaborative approach to improving digital literacy and to identify issues that cannot be resolved with current resources.

- BBK began to partner with the City of Richmond's Literacy for Every Adult Program (LEAP) to implement the Broadband Training and Opportunities Program (BTOP). The BTOP program provides online digital literacy instruction through the Learner Web platform. Students are assessed to determine their level of digital literacy and then given appropriate Learner Plans. There are 7 Learner Plans which range from computer basics to broadband consumer awareness. Learner Plans use videos to teach parents basic concepts and provide additional links for parents who want additional information. Videos are available in English and Spanish.

  BBK is using this partnership to train parents in digital literacy at multiple BTOP sites throughout the City of Richmond. Parents who complete a minimum of four hours of BTOP instruction are eligible to receive a refurbished computer from BBK. BBK is also referring parents who need additional instruction to BTOP once they complete training at the Nevin Center. WCC Adult Ed faculty is responsible for assisting BTOP students at two sites. BBK has connected 62 families to the Internet. Ten families receive free DSL service through the Access All program, 34 receive WiFi through the Barrett Apartments Community Network, and 18 families have access through Internet Archive's WiFi Network. Internet Archive has reported that use is increasing monthly. To track usage we will coordinate with Internet Archive to collect usage data.

Overview of Major Challenges to Achieving Planned Results

Challenges
There were many challenges including difficulties identifying a clear course of action; having the right management and strategic expertise and clear delineation of roles and responsibilities.

- **In-home Broadband Adoption**
  The effort did not achieve its broadband connection goals initially because the costs related to providing wireless access exceeded the amount of money the Collaborate was able to raise. Later attempts to work with carriers were not fruitful because private telecommunications firms were unwilling to bear the costs of new infrastructures and declined to develop broadband services that did not look "viable" from a profit perspective. BBK was not able to direct families to services that require them to pay. Hardware costs, hidden fees, billing transparency, quality of service, and availability were major issues for BBK Zone families in acquiring broadband service.

- **Youth Training and Development**
  Many youth went through the ETPFI program but none went on to receive training by Stride to eventually go into the Contra Costa College (CCC) IT program. In order to successfully accomplish this goal BBK would have needed to raise the resources to support the young people to participate in training and to pursue subsequent training with Stride.

- **Service Integration**
  BBK was unable to implement the service integration deliverable during the project. BBK applied unsuccessfully for Promise Neighborhood funding that included the service integration for BBK families. However, this work is expected to continue as is described below.

Discuss Efforts to Address Challenges and Resolve Problems

BBK decided to reconstruct the team, develop a clear working plan which included identifying priorities and making agreements about roles and responsibilities. After BBK did these things, the work was significantly more organized and efficient and consequently successful. What also made BBK successful was the strength of the partners. Each partner that remained a part of the project was accountable and did a great job of following through on their responsibilities.

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- **In-home broadband adoption**
  BBK is currently working with a private organization, Internet Archive that is committed to righting the imbalance of broadband access for very little cost. We have successfully installed one antenna and are scheduled to talk to the Richmond Mayor and City Manager about how we can make no-cost, widespread broadband access a reality in Richmond.

- **Youth Training and Development**
  Currently, we are developing the Full-Circle Tech Fellowship a training of trainers program that will include development of youth in key ICT skills, which they will subsequently work with other residents and staff from BBK member organizations to develop. BBK is working with knowledgeable and experienced trainers to develop the curriculum and training plan.

- **Service Integration**
  WCCUSD is implementing the community schools model at Peres and Chavez as part of a larger effort – the Richmond Health Equity Partnership (RHEP) – in partnership with the City of Richmond, Contra Costa Health Services, University of California, Berkeley, The California Endowment's "Healthy Richmond" initiative, and strong CBOs serving children and families in Richmond. BBK has been providing services to children and families at these schools for the past several years (see below). The City of Richmond, lead agency for RHEP, has established an agreement with BBK Collaborative through WCCUSD, by which BBK will lead the Community Engagement work to engage parent groups, residents, school staff, and other community stakeholders in developing the Full Service Community Schools (FSCS) strategy at these schools, with the intent of duplicating it in other schools in Richmond and other areas of West Contra Costa County.

  For this effort, WCCUSD will fund BBK to hire two parents (residents of the BBK Zone with children attending Peres or Chavez) to become community organizers and liaisons for the FSCS implementation pilot. These BBK *Parent Partners* will become part of BBK's Community Engagement and Advocacy Team. They will be jointly trained by WCCUSD and BBK to serve as mentors and coaches to their peers. They will be responsible for (1) connecting parents and families to key information and support services to address needs; (2) helping families develop plans of action to resolve challenges that arise; (3) engaging parents in activities and as volunteers at the schools; (4) building parents' capacity to support their children's education and to navigate the school system effectively; and (5) engaging parents and community residents in helping plan the FSCS implementation at Peres and Chavez. This new BBK initiative to support the school reform efforts at the two schools will build on BBK's longstanding partnership with Peres aligned with its efforts to enable children to succeed in school.

IV.   Lessons and Recommendations

Summary of Lessons Learned

Lesson 1. Think big but limit agreements to achievable goals and consult experts to support the development of plan. Through the course of this grant BBK struggled to attain goals that it did not have the resources or acumen to achieve. BBK could have focused more energy on goals that it could reasonably achieve during the course of the grant. For example: BBK spent many months trying to advance a service integration initiative that was well beyond our political and resource capacity.

Lesson 2. Assign clear and specific roles and responsibilities to those with expertise. BBK had a lot of opportunity to learn while implementing this grant but we really needed a clearer plan and structure early on. Not having that delayed our progress on many of our objectives. For example: at the start of this grant several people were assigned to leadership or staff roles that they did not have the skill-set to accomplish. A clearer plan at the outset would have helped this very committed group to have a better grasp of what was actually attainable and who would be most appropriate for each task or role.

Lesson 3. Do a good job of marketing the point and purpose of the work to develop allies and increase excitement and buy-in. If more people had been excited and informed about the project BBK might have received more support earlier in the project which would have helped with finding training sites, moving a broadband agenda and recruitment of families.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Expanding the Project in Region or Scaling Up Statewide

Recommendation 1: There are many great resources in the Bay Area; one of them being people that have expertise in training people ICT skills. For the work with the 1000 families BBK developed its own curriculum that took a lot of time and resources from our management team. BBK is now partnering with 3 organizations that are funded to provide training and technical assistance to organizations and communities that want to improve their tech skills. The recommendation here is to put more energy into bringing in local established experts to complete the work and spend less time trying to learn while doing the job.

Recommendations to CETF Regarding Grants Management

Recommendation 1: So much of this work and process were very new to us and it was late in the life of the grant that we discovered other similar efforts. It would have been really helpful if CETF could have facilitated to linking us up with comparable efforts and to have some kind of clearinghouse or other information source where we could easily and regularly access what other people are doing, lessons learned and best practices.

Recommendation 2: The reporting process is tedious and seems redundant. It's difficult to get through all of the required pieces and have energy left over to offer the nice reflections and stories from program participants.

Recommendation 3: Clear expectations regarding how we will work with our grants manager, CETF staff availability and follow-up.

V.   Grant Agreement Requirements

Purchased Equipment

The project purchased a total of $494,353 in computers and related equipment to offer wireless connectivity.

Date	Description	Purpose	Amount	How it will be used.
2010-2012	Computers	Distribution to BBK Zone families	$87,190	Families will keep and continue to use their computers
10/2011	Wireless Repeater boxes	Sending signal for Wi-fi	$3000	Will be installed on building throughout the BBK Zone so that families will have Internet access
10/2011	Wireless Repeater Antennae	Sending signal for Wi-fi	$360	Installed on the East Bay Center for Performing Arts. Will remain there so that BBK Zone families will have Internet access

Unspent CETF Grant Funds

All of the CETF grants funds were expended.

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