



## Youth Policy Institute Final Report for the California Emerging Technology Fund June, 2010

**Name of Executive Director:** Dixon Slingerland  
**Name of Project Manager:** Griselda Ortiz  
**Manager Phone Number:** 213-688-2802  
**Manager Email:** gortiz@ypiusa.org  
**Name of Project:** The Valley Family Technology Project (VFTP)  
**Grant Number:** 1985109  
**Start Date:** July 2008 **End Date:** June 2010

### I. Financial Summary

- |                                                              |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| • Total Project Budget Spent:                                | \$463,297 |
| • CETF Grant Amount:                                         | \$292,000 |
| • Percentage of Match Funds Raised against Goal (\$876,000): | 30%       |
| • Cost Per Unit of Outcomes: (\$463,297/1298)                | \$360     |

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

#### Project Description

The Valley Family Technology Project (VFTP) will provide computer literacy classes as well as home computer systems to 300 low-income families. It will also provide broadband access, training, and resources to 450 families who have already graduated from VFTP, and have computers in their home with dial-up Internet service. The California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) will be funding a portion of the project management, 300 refurbished laptops and printers, and a portion of the 750 DSL lines families will receive at home.

#### Goals and Objectives from Grant Agreement

YPI achieved a great deal of success in surpassing its training goals reaching 121% of the intended members of the local community. We were also able to provide these families with computers as originally intended. We are proud to report that we were able to reach our goal and train 100% of the community advocates that then promoted the adoption of broadband technologies in the targeted neighborhood. Furthermore, we were able to again surpass our goal of educating local residents on the benefits of broadband technologies and develop and expand public partnerships to nurture broadband technology use within the community targeted by the program. However, as discussed in the Accomplishments and Lessons Learned sections below we failed to establish the long term the private partnerships needed to negotiate the necessary ongoing agreements with the broadband service providers to fulfill our obligation to connect the program participants to low cost broadband services.

**Project Outcomes Summary**

Outcome Description	Actual	Goal	Percent Completed
San Fernando Gardens public housing project residents will access education and training services(completed training about 6 weeks)	368	750	49%
Total number of VFTP participants completing broadband surveys	629	425	148%
Former VFTP graduates sign up for broadband after attending orientation and scoring at least 70% of the computer literacy mastery review assessment	368	450	82%
All 750 families will access education and training resources provided by VFTP online through broadband technologies	730	750	97%
Families that have previously completed the program will be provided with a broadband subscription after completing additional training	200	450	44%

**IV. Accomplishments and Challenges**

**Summary of Accomplishments and Impacts of Project**

***Assessment of Outcomes Achieved in Comparison to Grant Agreement***

- The Youth Policy Institute exceeded 10 of the outcomes in the agreement. However, the program encountered severe difficulties in having households adopt broadband services at home. The program records indicate that only 200 or 44% of the targeted participants adopted this service at home after completing the training. In addition not all the participants were able to access the web based services as originally planned due to the difficulty encountered by the program in developing and maintaining the VFTP portal.

***Delineation of Deliverables and Outcomes Not Achieved and Explanation***

- The program encountered severe difficulties ensuring participants subscribed to broadband services at home. Upon reflection, it can be said that this attributed by a couple of factors. The first of the major obstacles encountered was the lack of awareness on how request service, and use broadband services. Although the program was able to explain simplify this process, participants then encountered additional obstacles. First, many residents disclosed that they did not have a working phone jack at home. This made them ineligible to qualify for various DSL special offers that were priced within the target price point. The lack of additional low cost offerings further hindered this process and will are explained in greater detail below. Lastly, we did not have the staff needed to fully develop and maintain the VFTP portal as originally envisioned when the Grant Agreement was signed.

***Discussion of Other Positive Results from Project***

A major output of this project has been reaching out to the community and providing basic awareness on the benefits of broadband technology as a means to support the learning process for themselves and their children. VFTP staff and volunteers were invited onto school campuses, community centers, libraries, and in some cases – homes and present information on these key points. Community wide Knowledge and awareness on this topic has been the major output of this project. In addition, the community has demonstrated a willingness to embrace broadband technology and think, strategically about how to best align the use of technology to support their every day practices. This was accomplished through the following efforts:

1. **Broadband Informational Sessions:** Local schools, such as San Fernando Institute of Applied Media, Bert Corona Charter and Monseñor Oscar Romero Charter Schools worked with YPI to hold informational sessions on the benefits of broadband connectivity at their respective campuses. The VFTP Director, site coordinators, and afterschool tutoring staff supported outreach flyers and promotion of events. Participating AmeriCorps members also supported with outreach efforts by presenting this information at various community spaces.
2. **Traducelo Ahora software:** This was an application that was very well received by members of the community. Because many participants had very limited English proficiency, they felt this tool was extremely relevant to their daily lives. YPI therefore included training on IBM's *Traducelo Ahora* software in the trainings offered throughout the community.
3. **Grant and Local Agency support:** VFTP staff and Program Manager attended numerous community collaborative meetings, where key community agency stakeholders participated. The objective was to inform key community agencies about VFTP and possibilities of collaborating or informing their respective constituents of the possibility to receive VFTP services. These meetings proved to be critical as many community organizations, such as Friends of the Family, and other school administrators approached VFTP staff to partner in support of the program.
4. **Vendor Security and Agreement with Time Warner Cable Company (TWC):** TWC initially embraced VFTP goals and objective and committed to an accessible service plan for participants. TWC provided DSL broadband services to the 91 families who graduated in February, 2010, and continued providing services to additional families. YPI also managed to secure a contract with AT&T to provide service to 109 original participants. who had the phone jacks needed to install the low cost DSL offerings. While this was available, it helped to generate a great deal of interest in the program. Unfortunately, this was not sustained once the offerings were no longer available.

## **Overview of Major Challenges to Achieving Planned Results**

### ***Identify Major Challenges to Successful Implementation***

The Youth Policy Institute faced two major challenges during the grant period; both of these resulted from the inability to secure affordable broadband service for participants.

- The Valley Family Technology Project goal was to inform low-income families and community members of the importance to use technology and broadband services. Although VFTP staff and volunteers successfully communicated the importance to many community members and peaked their interest in signing up for service, the lack of an affordable rate and a phone jack in some cases proved to be great challenges. Basic need to install and access broadband services were not foreseen as VFTP began to implement program. YPI was also hoping to leverage any affordable rates that CETF could collectively leverage at a statewide level.
- The development and maintenance of the VFTP portal also proved to be a significant challenge which required time and resources not anticipated by the staff upon drafting the Grant Agreement.

### ***Discuss Efforts to Address Challenges and Resolve Problems***

The VFTP program staff kept the CETF Investment Officer informed on the difficulties securing an affordable ongoing broadband rate that could be made available to all participants. Once it became evident that a deal would not be reached with providers, we reached out to CETF in hopes to leverage their statewide presence. Although CETF pursued this aggressively they were also unsuccessful in securing this rate.

CETF was gracious to work with YPI to renegotiate original grant to allocate \$210k for VFTP and \$120k towards the implementations of the School2Home program at the San Fernando Institute of Applied Media (SFIAM) middle school; where participating student families received an Ipad upon completing the required training. The Ipad is now used by students and teachers in their daily instruction. The program has been a great success and significantly impacted the participating school community.

Time Warner Cable Company (TWC) initially fully embraced the VFTP goals and objective and committed to an accessible service plan for participants. TWC provided DSL broadband services to the 91 families whom graduated in February 2010, and continued providing services to additional families. YPI also managed to secure a contract with AT&T to provide service to 109 original participants. Although this was a significant accomplishment, it fell short of providing the ongoing opportunity to have new families leverage this offer.

## **V. Lessons and Recommendations**

### **Summary of Lessons Learned**

Lesson #1. Though the goal of the VFTP was to provide awareness and information regarding the importance of technology and broadband services, we did not anticipate how the financial hardships encountered by families to impact their ability to subscribe to broadband services. This was a great challenge we encountered and, realistically, did not have the funding or adequate mechanism to support each participant or household experiencing this challenge. This will be considered upon embarking similar projects in the future.

Lesson #2. During the orientation sessions conducted by the staff it became apparent that many more families than anticipated did not have access to computing hardware. Although participants expressed an understanding of the importance of using a computer, they also expressed how frustrating it was to gain access to computers in the community. This underscores the need to identify low cost computing options for residents and establish additional public computing centers.

Lesson #3. Negotiating contracts with Internet service providers before program implementation would have been instrumental. One of the greatest challenges to fully implement VFTP was finalizing affordable plans for program participants. Months well into the project, YPI was able to secure a limited amount of high-speed connection services from Time Warner Cable and other subcontract with AT&T. However, had these negotiations been completed much earlier, a greater number of families and participants would have accessed these services.

### **Recommendations**

#### ***Recommendations for Expanding the Project in Region or Scaling Up Statewide***

Recommendation #1: A great majority of participants and community members do not have access to a computer. It would be helpful to help establish public computing centers in targeted communities that can accommodate the high level of demand. In addition, it will be very helpful that the community is well informed on these resources and that programs have a good working relationship with local anchor institutions that can provide access to their available computing resources. In some cases it is a lack of awareness on where these resources can be accessed so it will be useful to compile this information and present it to the community.

#### ***Recommendations to CETF Regarding Grants Management***

Recommendation #1: Allow grantees to significantly modify the terms of the grant based on findings that occurred after the implementation begins. During this time, organizations can propose a different approach to heightening technology and broadband accessibility and adoption

**Recommendation #2:** The CETF program officer was a pleasure to work with. When faced with delayed implementation, due to lack of securing service plans with broadband providers, CETF decided to reallocate \$120,000 to the School2Home project at the San Fernando Institute of Applied Media (SFIAM); where once parents completed the required training, they would receive computer/hardware to take home and their child can use in the classroom. To date, this has been the greatest modification to the grant and has had a tremendous positive impact on the community.

## VI. Grant Agreement Requirements

### Purchased Equipment

The project purchased a total of \$72,916.50 in computers and printers and \$83,421.00 to offer DSL connectivity to participants and families in the Valley Family Technology Project.

Date	Description	Purpose	Quantity	Amount	How it will be used.
July, 2009	Computers	Individual/family keep	215	\$193,070.00	Participants received computer after completing VFTP curriculum
July, 2009	Printers	Individual/family keep	215	\$ 21,581.25	Some participants received printer after completing VFTP curriculum
Feb. 2009	DSL Service	Household Installation	376	\$203,520.00	Provide access to VFTP participants' households

### CETF of Grant Funds

\$120,000 was reassigned to the School2Home Project at San Fernando Institute of Applied Media.

\$206,250.00 of CETF grants funds were expended.

Expenditure report attached for your reference.

In order to ensure sustainability, YPI has established a number of partnerships with like-minded organizations in Los Angeles. These organizations include: Access Now (special events); Computers for Youth (parent and student training), Dewey Square Group (curriculum and special events), Manchester Community Technologies (installation of Internet hot-spots and "MAN"s in Pacoima), Southeast Community Development Corporation (Curriculum and the use of their mobile lab), Community Centers Incorporated (curriculum), El Monte-Rosemead High School District (distance learning program), City of Los Angeles (Use of facilities, Curriculum), LAUSD K-12 schools (use of facilities), Los Angeles Mission College (use of facilities), Housing Authority (use of facilities), and Alas Media (curriculum and training). CETF's Get Connected! Regional roundtable meetings have been particularly useful for expanding our network and establishing new partnerships.

YPI will continue to pursue and establish new partnerships in an effort to provide Los Angeles youth and adults with access to technology, trainings and resources.