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Affordable Housing Residents Get Wired

WITH THE GOAL of connecting low-income people to the Internet and other technology, One Economy Corp. announced its Bring IT Home California campaign at Valencia Gardens, an affordable housing development in San Francisco.

The campaign has two programs: Broadband@Home, which seeks to connect 84,000 low-income Californians statewide to free or low-cost broadband at home, and 21st-century Communities, which will connect low-income households to high-speed Internet access by integrating technology with local community development.

Nine 21st-century Communities will be developed in California by September 2010. Valencia Gardens, a HOPE VI development, is in San Francisco's Mission neighborhood, one of the first communities selected.

The statewide initiative is being funded by a \$2.5 million grant from the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) and AT&T's commitment to provide two years of high-speed Internet access to 10,000 households.

The effort is part of One Economy's



One Economy's Digital Connectors program trains youths to serve as technology ambassadors in their communities.

larger national campaign to bring technology to low-income families.

"To bridge the economic divide, we have to bridge the digital divide," said Sunne McPeak, president and CEO of CETF.

The technology provided will help allocate new tools for affordable housing residents to improve their lives, she said.

Providing technology is also a key to funding new affordable housing developments.

Forty-two states offer points or other incentives in their low-income housing tax credit programs to projects that provide Internet access for residents in their homes, said Alan Greenlee, vice president of One Economy in California.

His group takes the next step by helping the residents go home and use the technology. ■