

# Digital Access for All

The Patterson Foundation (TPF) created its Digital Access for All (DA4A) initiative which explores the efforts of multiple sectors working to enhance access to technology that connects people in ways that foster inclusion and well-being.



## Now Online: "Better Together" Virtual Session: How Digital Access Intersects with Our Work, Our Lives and Our World



["Better Together" Virtual Session \(time 1:44:21\)](#)

The Patterson Foundation (TPF) was proud to partner with the [Florida Prosperity Partnership](#) (FPP) for a golden opportunity to listen to national experts and gather ideas from organizations dedicated to elevating financial capability for all. The session underscored the links between financial success and digital access. DA4A

Initiative Manager [Dr. Laurey Stryker](#) served as the moderator for the event, which featured representatives from [EveryoneOn](#), [Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City](#), and [Allegany Franciscan Ministries](#).

More than 50 representatives from organizations throughout the state attended the event to learn about innovative programs taking place in Florida and around the country to address issues related to digital access, device availability, and digital literacy and skills training.

First, we explored the topic of why digital access is critically important to people and organizations. The second question we explored was how organizations are approaching the digital divide. We ended the session with a final question, "What is Your Organization Doing to Close the Digital Divide?" and we discovered that COVID-19 has



## Innovative Ideas: Sarasota Technology Users Group



Mike Hutchinson of [Sarasota Technology Users Group](#)

Are you upgrading computers, or do you have old machines that you no longer use? If so, Mike Hutchinson and other volunteers at [Suncoast Technology Users Group](#) (STUG) accepts laptop and desktop computers - on both Windows and Apple platforms - as well as monitors, tablets, hard drives, and CD/DVD readers and writers. STUG is also seeking webcams, microphones, and WiFi hotspots to accommodate a rising demand due to the pandemic. COVID-19 has created new challenges as the nonprofit struggles to match its short supply of devices to a growing demand for their services.

Each year, STUG refurbishes hundreds of donated computers and then partners with organizations like Guardian Ad Litem, Take Stock in Children, Salvation Army, AARP, and others to provide machines, free of charge, to local children, families, and older adults with limited resources.

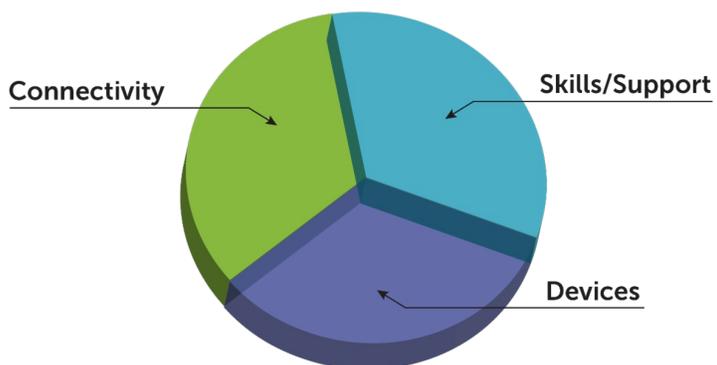
"Anyone can request a refurbished computer without a referral. Each computer is wiped of its memory and outfitted with either Microsoft Office or LibreOffice software and antivirus protection." Said Hutchinson. "We see some

the Digital Divide, and we discovered that COVID-19 has been both a disrupter and an accelerator in closing the digital divide.

TPF doesn't arrive with the answer, and that's particularly important with DA4A, where there are many approaches and solutions. What was once again affirmed for the foundation during the recent FPP "Better Together" event was that where leadership, willingness, readiness, capacity, and culture align, anything is possible.

[CONTINUE READING: Highlights from FPP "Better Together"](#) by Laurey Stryker.

## THE THREE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DIGITAL ACCESS



**Connectivity:** the ability to connect to affordable, reliable, high-speed internet

**Devices:** the right device for one's needs (laptop, tablet, etc.)

**Skills/Support:** the training needed to use the necessary devices and programs for one's needs and the technical support to fix issues as they come up (devices not working properly, software updates, etc.)



## ASPIRATIONS JOURNALISM

The DA4A initiative is exploring the efforts of multiple sectors -- individuals, businesses, nonprofits, government, and the media -- working to enhance access to technology that connects people in ways that foster inclusion and well-being.

In partnership with the Herald-Tribune, Aspirations Journalism is covering this exploration through stories that build empathy and evolve our understanding. HT's reporting explains what digital access entails, how it affects our daily lives, and why it's important, while revealing opportunities for collaboration.

[Read the latest stories around Digital Access for All](#)

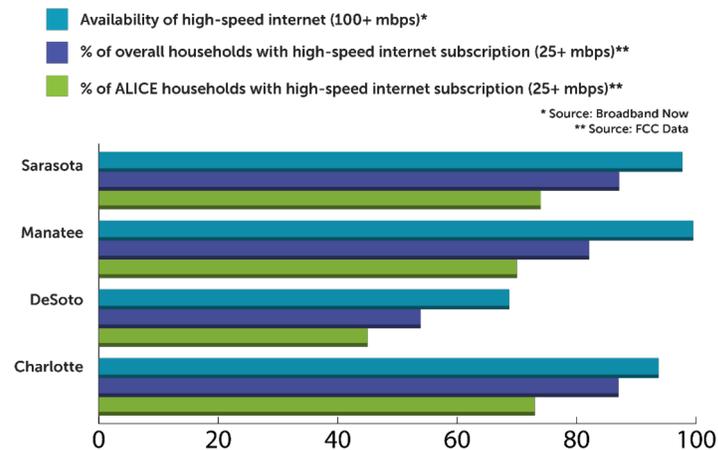
and annuals production. Our hardware team has been really old stuff. If we can put Windows 10 on it, we build it. And you can put Windows 10 on machines that are 10 to 15 years old!"

If you're thinking about donating but unsure how to wipe your computer's memory, STUG can help. They will help you back up your files too. STUG also offers low-cost digital literacy and skills training. Classes cover a variety of topics across different platforms, including Windows 10 and macOS as well as Apple and Android smartphones and tablets.

The STUG refurbishing shop is located at 3949 Sawyer Road in Sarasota and is usually staffed with volunteers from 10 a.m. to noon on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Contact STUG by phone at 941-539-7401, online at [thestug.org](http://thestug.org), or by email at [refurb@thestug.org](mailto:refurb@thestug.org).

[CONTINUE to Aspirations Journalism's STUG article](#)

## AVAILABILITY vs. SUBSCRIPTION RATES ON THE SUNCOAST



[\(click to enlarge\)](#)

## Connectivity Rates Demonstrate Challenges Faced by ALICE Households

What can an analysis of connectivity rates between ALICE households and the general population tell us about the Digital Divide? Quite a bit, it turns out. As the infographic demonstrates, ALICE households -- those earning less than \$50,000 per year for a family of four -- are significantly less likely than the general population in our four-county region to have high-speed internet in their homes.

It's important to remember that while these percentages show most households have an internet subscription, they also reveal that 53,199 homes do not. No matter the percentage, a significant number of families cannot regularly and easily access the internet to participate in our ever-increasingly digital world.

#### Why Internet Speed Matters:

While 25/3 (download/upload) speeds are still the federal minimum for high-speed internet, Zoom and similar platforms recommend at least 100/25 speeds to ensure a smooth user experience. Having the federal minimum speed is like having a working car at your disposal, but not enough gas to get you to your appointment across town-- and no funds to refill your tank.

Do you have a resource or idea to share with the community? Is there a national, regional, or local effort you'd like us to know about or feature in future publications? Contact DA4A at [digitalaccess@thepattersonfoundation.org](mailto:digitalaccess@thepattersonfoundation.org) to be considered.



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