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

**Dr. Laurey Stryker Passes the DA4A Leadership Baton to Cheri Coryea**

In June 2020, TPF created the DA4A initiative to explore opportunities for advancing digital access in the region. Using a multi-sector approach to connect people in ways that foster digital inclusion proved to be as important as any other form of communication in decades -- especially for Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE) individuals and families.

There was no one better to call upon than long-time TPF consultant Dr. Laurey Stryker to lead the development of the DA4A Initiative. Dr. Stryker has been the initiative manager for EdExplorerSRO and Advancing Philanthropic Leadership -- which began as a collaboration with the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy to create the Fellows Program. Her strategic mind and imaginative way of exploring the possibilities helped develop necessary connective tissue, resulting in DA4A bandwidth to provide opportunities for the four-county region.

As Dr. Stryker steps into the role of strategic advisor, it is my honor to have her support in leading the highly skilled DA4A team to the next level of action. Having served as administrator to Manatee County Government and leading many social service initiatives from development into implementation, the groundwork laid by Dr. Stryker is another testament to Dr.

**Beyond Philanthropy Solutions: Digital Navigation and Community Collaboration**

By Maribel Martinez

The COVID-19 pandemic spurred a sudden shift and a spike in digital activity across all sectors, leaving behind those without an internet connection or a computing device they could use effectively. In parallel, digital navigation, which consists of individuals trained to assist others with acquiring affordable internet, computers, and digital literacy training, rapidly grew as a logical strategy to accelerate digital adoption in the U.S.

At least 20% of households within Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota counties are without internet and computers. To support asset-limited families, TPF's DA4A initiative launched the Digital Navigator Program and began working more closely with three community-based organizations -- Goodwill Manasota, UnidosNow, and Women's Resource Center. Each volunteered to join the Digital Navigator Program in its pilot phase. In all, the three agencies identified ten staff members who were trained in four hours using custom instructional materials developed by DA4A initiative consultant Maribel Martinez. Training consisted of a case management approach to helping clients subscribe to affordable broadband offers, finding computers or tablets.
in these first twelve months is another testament to Dr. Stryker’s skillful leadership.

In the spirit of the recently concluded 2020 Tokyo Olympics, Laurey has successfully passed the baton. The DA4A team is ready to round the 4th turn and take this initiative to the finish line. Our appreciation for her insight into the three main elements (devices, connectivity, and skills/training), better known as the three-legged stool, set forth the importance of a balanced approach to enhancing technology for all.

Legislation Awareness
By Cheri Coryea and John Ferguson

On Tuesday, August 10, the U.S. Senate voted to pass a historic $1T bipartisan infrastructure bill with a vote tally of 69-30 in the affirmative. For a look at what is included in the bill, click here, but $65B has been earmarked for broadband and other digital inclusion efforts. This investment would be the largest amount of federal funding ever dedicated to broadband access and digital equity. For a breakdown from our friends at the National Digital Inclusion Alliance, please click here.

One important highlight would be allocating $14.2B for Broadband Benefit, which proposes to evolve the current Emergency Broadband Benefit program into the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), potentially positioning the program to become permanent support beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposal also amends the program to require all internet service plans to be eligible for ACP and increase the eligibility

Emergency Broadband Benefit Program
Enrollments and Claims Tracker

| Total Households Enrolled Weekly Nationally (as of August 8, 2021) | 4,432,034 (32.8%↑) |
to be eligible for ACP and increase the eligibility threshold from 135% to 200% of the poverty line while reducing the program benefit to $30 per month (lowered from $50 per month).

The bill still needs to pass the House and is anticipated to be considered after the budget passes the Senate with the possibility of passage before the end of 2021. This historic legislation signals promising bipartisan support for broadband deployment and digital equity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Households Enrolled in Florida (as of August 9, 2021)</th>
<th>283,580 (54.8%↑)</th>
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<tr>
<td>This tracker is updated on a weekly and monthly basis. You can find more current numbers here.</td>
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The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program Helps Individuals Afford Internet Service During the Pandemic

By Jake Webster

I recently became underemployed. The job I had in 2019 was downgraded by my employer due to the impacts of covid-19 in the hospitality sector. I found myself cutting back items from a list of "must-haves" to make myself feel important and informed. Suddenly, I was down to disconnecting my cable/internet service, for which I had paid a high price since 2014 but wasn't able to justify at this time. A support counselor at an agency had just been on a webinar sponsored by The Patterson Foundation and conducted by the FCC. The webinar explained how someone in my situation could qualify for a reduced cable/internet monthly service while the funds were still available. When I added up the potential benefit to my empty pockets, it came to about $2,000 savings. I was able to work with the support counselor to access the application page and submit my application for service.

Luckily my internet provider was on the list of vendors participating in the program. I couldn't believe how quickly my application was processed and approved. Now I have service that is my lifeline to information. I've heard the phrase "priceless" used as slang for something so important you can't live without. Well, in this case, my experience in the FCC/EBB program has been just that, "priceless."

I'd strongly encourage others to look into this program just in case you need that extra $2,000 for gas, groceries, or medicine until the covid-19 epidemic finally passes.

Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee Keeps Seniors Connected During COVID

By Amy Towery, VP of Development

The global pandemic impacted many Manatee County residents with isolation and loneliness. Early in the pandemic, Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee realized that many older adults were facing two barriers to staying connected to people outside their homes. These were access to technology devices, such as tablets and computers, and the knowledge to use those devices.

For our clients at Daybreak Adult Day Center, a PLUS program of Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee, this meant that we worked with their caregivers to find devices in the home that could be used for programming via Zoom. We then provided instruction to the caregivers on how to access our programming.

During the past year, twenty-six clients have participated in over 150 Zoom sessions and engaged in various activities utilizing technology. These include car club discussions, interactive Wheel of Fortune games, arts and crafts, trivia challenges, nutrition education with our staff nutritionist Dr. Lauri Wright, "Name that Tune," and bingo. All have helped them stay connected during these challenging times.

"It has always been important to us to keep our clients connected to our programs, to their families, and to each other," said Maribeth Phillips, president & CEO of Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee. "In 2015 and 2016, we embraced programming that taught older adults how to utilize tablets on the Breezie platform, and in 2019, a computer lab, made possible by Charter Communications, was added at Daybreak Adult Day Center to assist our clients in learning how to utilize technology to stay connected to family, surf the web, and send emails. Those programs helped to prepare us to address the digital divide we experienced so prevalently at the onset of the pandemic," she added.
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 to be considered.

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