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.

**Working Closely with Families, Now in Digital Navigation**  
*By Lisbeth Oscuvilca, UnidosNow’s Family Engagement Director*

The Patterson Foundation’s Digital Navigator Program trains local organizations to connect asset-limited families and individuals with opportunities to obtain digital connectivity, devices, skills, and support. Through a series of trainings, implementation meetings, and knowledge-sharing sessions with other nonprofits, consultants help participants embed the responsibilities of the digital navigator into the organization’s daily work and culture.

Three organizations are currently participating in a pilot of the Digital Navigator Program:  
- **Goodwill Manasota**  
- **UnidosNow**  
- **Women’s Resource Center**

Lisbeth Oscuvilca, UnidosNow’s

**Digital Access and Economic Competitiveness**  
*By Cheri Coryea*

Leaders from **CareerSource Suncoast** **Manatee** and **Venice** Chambers, the **Bradenton Area Economic Development Corporation**, and **CareerEdge** came together in late September to gauge interest in joining forces to elevate the economic competitiveness of the region through digital access. The group displayed unity in taking action to move forward efforts in expanding broadband infrastructure, workforce training efforts, literacy, and digital skills development. Next steps include reviewing and aligning the strategic plan and policy development among the leaders to enhance broadband assets. Work continues through the end of the year to study best practices across the region and dig deeper with local businesses’ needs for advanced technology skillsets.
Partnering with the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading to Survey ALICE Families

This fall, the Digital Access for All team is partnering with the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading’s THIS BOOK IS COOL! program to survey the digital access needs of ALICE families living in the four-county area. Since 2020, THIS BOOK IS COOL! has provided free books and family engagement activities for thousands of asset-limited children in grades PreK-3 to prevent summer learning loss -- as a gift from The Patterson Foundation.

After meeting with the Engagement Team, we determined that this was a unique opportunity to learn about the digital access challenges faced by more than 3,000 children and families who participated in THIS BOOK IS COOL! during the summer.

To date, we have received more than 500 responses to the survey, with more coming in daily. Stay tuned to our next newsletter for details and analysis of the survey results and findings.

Interested in learning more about the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading? Join SCGLR and representatives from Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota counties for its 2021 Virtual Community Update Breakfast.
National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Releases Interactive Federal Funding Guide

In September, NTIA released an Interactive Federal Funding Guide to enhance BroadbandUSA's "one-stop" federal funding site. BroadbandUSA's Federal Funding site connects you to various funding opportunities that support broadband planning, digital inclusion, and deployment projects. The guide provides an interactive, step-by-step approach for users to filter through more than 90 broadband-related programs compiled from 12 federal agencies and the Federal Communications Commission.

Source: NTIA

Learning, Sharing and Collaborating with Our Four Counties

Since the passage of the American Rescue Plan in early 2021, the Digital Access for All initiative has advanced the learning, sharing, and collaborative opportunities of local governments in our 4-county region. Focused on expanding opportunities for funding under the plan for broadband access and digital training, Charlotte County Administrator Hector Flores rounded out each county’s updates.

Concluding the 8th DA4A webversation on September 23, County Administrator Flores confirmed that the lack of access to broadband infrastructure in the rural eastern part of Charlotte County created a gap in service that emphasized the digital divide. DA4A is committed to maintaining engagement with each of our local governments as we follow the progress of the American Rescue Plan.

Emergency Broadband Benefit Program Enrollment

It’s not too late to register for the Emergency Broadband Benefit! Eligible households can enroll through an approved provider or by visiting GetEmergencyBroadband.org.

| Total Households Enrolled Weekly | 6,384,277 (19.2%↑) |
Nationally (as of October 10, 2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Households Enrolled in Florida (as of October 11, 2021)</th>
<th>429,197 (21.45↑)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte County</td>
<td>1,998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeSoto County</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatee County</td>
<td>7,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarasota County</td>
<td>2,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Households Enrolled in the Suncoast Region</td>
<td>12,872</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data tracker: This tracker is updated on a weekly and monthly basis. You can find more current numbers here. The FCC now provides more granular data on the total enrolled households by the first three digits of a ZIP code and the complete five-digit ZIP code as of the first of the month, starting with August 1.

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**National Digital Inclusion Week Recap**

*By Maribel Martinez*

This year’s Digital Inclusion Week, observed annually by organizations and individuals interested in closing the digital divide and marked by various events to drive the national conversation around broadband access, computing devices, and digital skills training, saw a measurable increase in participation across multiple sectors. Led by the National Digital Inclusion Alliance, organizations showed their support for digital equity through social media, symposiums and online meetings, educational opportunities, fundraising campaigns, and on-the-ground events such as computer drives. The Patterson Foundation’s Digital Access for All team participated through social media, capturing the initiative’s work over the past year around awareness and community empowerment, shared learning and resources, digital navigation, and regional approaches to beyond the check philanthropy.