The Patterson Foundation created its Digital Access for All initiative to explore, educate, and engage sectors working to enhance access to technology that connects people in ways that foster inclusion and well-being.

Pathways Forward: Learnings and Takeaways in Digital Access Webversation
On November 17th from 12-1pm EST

We’re excited to share “Pathways Forward: Learnings and Takeaways in Digital Access,” a National Philanthropy Scan report written as a follow-up to a series of eight Funder-to-Funder workshops The Patterson Foundation co-hosted with The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading from October 2022 to June 2023. The “Pathways Forward” report summarizes each workshop and highlights key takeaways. Emerging themes include the value of creating spaces for learning, sharing, and connecting around digital access, the importance of multi-sector and multi-organization collaboration, the role of systems-level and long-term approaches, and more.

You’re invited to a Webversation on Friday, November 17, from 12-1pm EST (11am-12pm CST, 10-11am MST, 9-10am PST) where we will share highlights from the report, connect with each other, reflect together, and discuss digital access strategy moving forward. Please RSVP here.

Cheri Coryea and Michael Zimmerman, a former Fellow at The Patterson Foundation and now with the Farash

DeSoto “Solutions to Actions” Dive into Discovery

On October 10, 2023, The Patterson Foundation hosted a Dive Into Discovery celebration in DeSoto County, spotlighting eight inspiring community themes discovered through conversations over the past year. The event showcased DeSoto’s vibrant community, featuring organizations, valuable resources, and meaningful presentations by various community changemakers. It fostered connections, promoted learning, encouraged the exchange of ideas, and ensured that each person left with a renewed sense of hope and inspiration, as well as steps to propel positive change within our community. Read more about it in the following blogs:

- Aspirations and Assets by Andrew Spector, TPF Fellow 2023/24
- Patience, Perseverance, and Pineapples by Beth Duda, director of the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

Cheri Coryea and Michael Zimmerman, a former Fellow at The Patterson Foundation and now with the Farash
Foundation, facilitated the workshop series featuring Digital Technology experts from around the Country and their work in the three essential elements: connectivity, devices, and skills training/support. Now, Andrew Spector, a new Fellow at The Patterson Foundation, has joined the DA4A team and is helping lead the National Philanthropy Scan work. Andrew comes to us after eight years in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where he taught as a 6th-grade teacher through Teach For America and co-founded and led Tulsa Changemakers, a youth leadership development and action organization. Through his experience working with children and families, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, Andrew knows firsthand the importance of digital access.

**Suncoast Digital Inclusion Month**

Last month, The Patterson Foundation’s [Digital Access for All (DA4A) initiative](https://www.pattersonfoundation.org/programs/digital-access-for-all) celebrated Suncoast Digital Inclusion Month (SDIM). Collaborating with [Digital Navigator Program agencies, The GAP](https://www.thegap.org), [Aspirations To Actions](https://aspirations.toactions.org), [Affordable Connectivity Program](https://www.affordableconnectivityprogram.org) engagers, and others, a series of digital inclusion events were implemented to raise awareness of the digital divide and help increase internet, devices, and digital skills adoption in Charlotte, Desoto, Manatee, and Sarasota counties.

As part of SDIM, the DA4A team held a device drive supporting the [Sarasota Technology Users Group](https://sarasota-techusers.org) (STUG). With donation drop-off locations throughout the four-county area that The Patterson Foundation serves, more than 60 devices were donated to STUG in the name of DA4A.

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**An Agenda for Rural AI**

What would a rural area have to gain from Artificial Intelligence (AI)? That's a question I asked myself when I received an invitation from the University of Florida, Associate Professor, Berkman Klein Center, Harvard University Senior Fellow-Tech Policy, Mozilla, Jasmine McNealy. She had recently heard the University of South Florida, WUSF Public Media, NPR interview that reporter Skylar Lebron had conducted with The Patterson Foundation (TPF) entitled, "How a Sarasota-based organization is helping people with internet access and literacy." In that interview, I talked about the work TPF is doing in the [Digital Access for All (DA4A)](https://www.pattersonfoundation.org/programs/digital-access-for-all) and [Aspirations to Actions (A2A)](https://aspirations.toactions.org) initiatives in rural DeSoto County.

The emphasis in both initiatives is directly reaching the people of the community and joining in conversations that allow their aspirations to become actionable possibilities. One of the eight areas that have risen to the top during our conversations with over 427 people in DeSoto County, Florida, is Technology and Digital Access. Something they lack and has hindered their progress academically and economically as a community. That said, this is where Rural AI comes in and why Associate Professor McNealy asked The Patterson Foundation to participate in a conference she developed and conducted on October
In the coming months, we look forward to sharing a detailed report on the outputs and outcomes of SDIM.

24th & 25th at the University of Florida in Gainesville, around Rural AI.

Learn more here.

The Gap’s October Report

To optimize and amplify impact, The Patterson Foundation (TPF) has initiated The Gap to close the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) eligibility and enrollment gap in the Suncoast to ensure those eligible for ACP are taking advantage of it. This month’s report shares ACP engagers’ participation in Suncoast Digital Inclusion Month. Over ten events were attended by ACP engagers, and over 50 intake forms were completed! With digital navigation underway, TPF digital navigators are now helping individuals and families enroll in ACP, get a device, and connect to skills training services.

Learn more here.

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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