To optimize and amplify impact, The Patterson Foundation supports efforts to close The Gap – the ever-widening gap that exists between individuals and families connected with affordable internet, devices (desktop, laptop, tablet), and digital skills training, and those who are not.
# The Team

## Leadership:

- **Cheri Coryea** — DA4A Lead, The Gap’s Talent Recruiter/Acquisition
- **Kiarra Louis** — Initiative Support Coordinator, The GAP Manager
- **Sandra Vega-Picchietti** — The Gap’s Co-Manager
- **Aileen Peña** — Event Coordination & Management
- **Kelli Karen Smith** — Event Process & Structure Development

## Active Digital Navigators

- Carol Kranitz
- Carolina Franco
- Cinthia Peña
- Joni Hansen
- Melissa Hirstein

## Active Engagers

- Aileen Peña
- Alexa Carr
- Alicia Exantus
- Andrew Spector
- Avery Crew Prado de Lima
- Carol Kranitz
- Carolina Franco
- Carrie Miley
- Cinthia Peña
- Donna Puhalovich

- Joni Hansen
- Kellie Alexander
- Kera Picker
- Krisztina Madak
- Laurey Stryker
- Lyndsey Smith
- Marla Smith
- Melissa Hirstein
- Sandra Vega-Picchietti
- Sherry Oehler
- Vida Perlow
February Event Spotlight
March Event - Study Away Week
Updates

Digital Access Hosts an Enrollment Event During Study Away Week (March 11 to March 15, 2024)

Through a collaboration with The Patterson Foundation and Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, "TPF Immersive Impact Through Engagement and Consulting" provides undergraduate and graduate students attending Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy a professional growth opportunity using The Patterson Foundation's initiatives. This semester-long course culminates with a weeklong spring study away experience at The Patterson Foundation in Sarasota, F.

IU Students Aimee Tapeceria, Erica Henry, Kimberly Hestermann, and Olivia Covington were assigned to work with Digital Access for All. As consultants for the week, they provided strategic expertise and enhanced DA4A's goals, especially as it relates to The Gap. On Monday, March 11th, DA4A hosted an Enrollment event and digital navigators who have completed TPF's Digital Navigator Program offered onsite assistance to eligible individuals and families to help them explore affordable connectivity, devices, and skill support options. Additionally, registered participants had an opportunity to sign up for digital literacy and skills training and connect with other organizations providing local resources. The IU students had an opportunity to witness the meaning behind More than Money philanthropy — a philosophy we embrace at TPF as we invest time, energy, and expertise working with our partners locally and beyond.

On Friday, students presented their observations, successes, and challenges and a strategic plan on how two organizations with Digital Navigators—The Women’s Resource Center and the Multicultural Health Institute—can create their own enrollment events or embed them into the events they host throughout the year.

We’re thankful to these two organizations for being part of Study Away Week!

Event Feedback From The Clients

- Carol k. Went above and beyond. So appreciate it
- Was impressed with the service and thrilled to get a new laptop to help with medical services and maybe start a business
- I am grateful for the services I received from Jessica and the team at the event.
- Jessica could relate to me and had a wonderful personality. She is helping me also obtain information on Medicaid for my daughter who has autism. Sandra was also excellent in her help.
- I was happy to qualify, as I had never heard of this program before!
To maximize and enhance impact, The Patterson Foundation is shifting the focus of The Gap program from solely addressing ACP enrollment to closing digital access gaps in connectivity, devices, and skill/support within the Suncoast region. An ever-widening gap exists between individuals and families connected with the three essential elements of digital access and those who are not. The three essential elements of digital access are:

- **Connectivity**: The ability to connect to affordable, reliable, high-speed internet
- **Devices**: Possessing the right device for one’s needs
- **Digital Literacy Skills Training and Support**: Having access to the necessary training and support to use devices and programs effectively while solving technical issues when they arise

## ACP Wind Down Update

The Affordable Connectivity Program stopped accepting new applications and enrollments in February 2024. The last fully funded month of the program is April 2024. Households are also encouraged to consult their internet company to learn more about how the end of the ACP will impact their internet service and bill. However, Clients have shared that they haven’t received communication from their internet service providers. TPF Digital Navigators will continue to support The Gap Clients to ensure they are informed and assisted throughout this process.

**A press released by the FCC, shared the following:**

“Many of these households have contacted the Commission to express their disappointment and frustration that they can no longer sign up for the program. Others have contacted the agency to express concern about the impending end of the program, noting its impact on older adults, families with school children, and military families at risk of losing their internet service without the ACP benefit,” said Chairwoman Rosenworcel in her letter to Congress. “They worry that without ACP support they will lose access to employment, education, health care, and more.”
ACP Consumer Survey

In December 2023, the FCC conducted a survey of ACP recipients to enhance our understanding of the program's impact and how the end of the program may impact access to broadband services. Survey respondents were also given the opportunity to submit written responses to our questions about how losing ACP support would impact them.

Many said they would "take money from other bills" or "cut other basic expenses," like food or gas, if "their monthly internet bill were $30 higher." Many other respondents said they would "go without" internet or that they would have to "drop the service."

Survey Highlight #1

- More than three-quarters (77%) of the survey respondents say losing their ACP benefit would disrupt their service by making them change their plan or drop internet service entirely

Survey Highlight #2

- About half of survey respondents (47%) reported having either no internet service or relying solely on mobile internet service prior to receiving their ACP benefit. The same is true for rural respondents (53%)

Survey Highlight #3

- Over two-thirds of survey respondents (68%) reported they had inconsistent internet service or no internet service at all prior to ACP. The majority of this group cited affordability as the reason for having inconsistent or no service (80%)

Survey Highlight #4

- ACP subscribers reported that they use their ACP internet service to: schedule or attend healthcare appointments (72%), apply for jobs or complete work (48%), do schoolwork (75% for ACP subscribers 18-24 years old)
## Overview: Outputs & Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement &amp; Outreach</th>
<th>Jan. 2024</th>
<th>Feb &amp; March 2024</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Events</td>
<td>4 Events</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Intake Forms Completed</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Digital Navigation

| Clients Waiting to be Served           | 48           | 45               |
| Active Referrals to TPF Digital Navigators | 43           | 36               |
| Digital Navigator Feedback Rating     | 57% Excellent | 88.5% Excellent |
|                                       | 28% Good     | 7.7% Good        |
|                                       | 14% N/A      | 13.8% N/A        |

**Connectivity**

Given The Gap’s transition, we look forward to sharing this new data in April.

**Devices**

Given The Gap’s transition, we look forward to sharing this new data in April.

**Digital Skills/Support**

Given The Gap’s transition, we look forward to sharing this new data in April.
The Digital Access Status in the Suncoast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2022 Total Number of Households</th>
<th>Connectivity</th>
<th>Devices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With Internet Connection</td>
<td>Without an Internet Connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte County</td>
<td>90,457</td>
<td>83,637 (92.5%)</td>
<td>6,820 (7.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeSoto County</td>
<td>Data was not provided for DeSoto County.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manatee County</td>
<td>176,772</td>
<td>162,220 (91.8%)</td>
<td>14,552 (8.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarasota County</td>
<td>215,125</td>
<td>203,551 (94.6%)</td>
<td>11,574 (5.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2022 American Community Survey - Table S2801

Although these numbers demonstrate that thousands of households within the four-county region are connected, it does not account for the following three things:

1. **Connectivity is the ability to connect to affordable and reliable high-speed internet:** Among those connected are households who are struggling to pay for their monthly internet connection in addition to their basic necessities.

2. **Device sharing is common among households:** Device sharing is also a challenge families experience. Many households have at least one device, yet it may be shared among multiple family members, limiting each member’s ability to use the Internet meaningfully.

3. **Having a smartphone is not enough:** To engage meaningfully online, you need the right devices for your needs, such as a laptop, a desktop, or a tablet. No matter how smart a phone is, it is not conducive to remote learning, remote working, or applying for social services.