

Community Report and Program Recommendations for Urbana Latino and Underserved Population for the UC2B: Public Computing and Sustainability Grant Application

Background

Residential Areas

Hispanics living in Urbana may be characterized as an at risk population. Most of the population consists of immigrants from Mexico. The families have young children and these parents are young adults who often both work creating more hardships in caring for their children. Seventy percent of the Hispanic population in Urbana lives in one of four trailer parks. The majority live in Shadow Wood with significant numbers residing in Ivanhoe Estates. Smaller number of Hispanics live in Columbia Village and Northwood Trailer Parks. There is a community center at Shadow Wood but it is used for a number of social activities and has not been adequately staffed for after school programs. The other trailer parks do not have established community centers. A new neighborhood center, the Urbana Neighborhood Connection Center is opening this Fall and will serve both Hispanic and African American neighborhood residents. It is located at 1401 East Main Street in Urbana.

Schools and Public Library

Hispanic students are concentrated in four schools in Urbana. The schools are listed by the rank order of number of students in each site: Leal School (elementary), Urbana Middle School, Urbana High School, and the Early Childhood Program at Washington School. Data from the 2008-2009 year show that there are ~ 110 students from 60 families at Leal School, 62 students from 35 families at UMS and 36 students from 20 families at UHS. The Early Childhood Program has a significant number of Hispanic students and families but data are not available for this age group. The Urbana Free Library has a computer area for the use of its clients but information on computers in this facility was not collected.

Existing Planning and Programming Efforts to support Public Computing Centers in Urbana

Schools

Leal School has recently upgraded its computer lab and has 24 machines on a high speed network that are used by the students and teachers. There are plans to create a Family Resource Room for the parents of students to have access to computers and to learn how to use them. The space is small so 2-3 computers are planned for this room. However larger number of parents can be trained in planned workshops that would include training parents on the basics of operating a computer and setting up an email account and accessing the internet as well as learning how to use the School District's online program for parents to monitor their children's progress in school. These programs are Family Access and Skyward. In addition parents would be trained on how to access and enroll in

programs online such as those offered by the Urbana Park District and the UIUC Childcare Resource Center. Parents also will learn about how to use programs such as Skype so that they can video conference without charge with family members in their native countries.

The pilot Family Resource Center suggested by the Urbana School District Technology Plan and adapted for Hispanic families at Leal School by the District's Latino Family Liaison Coordinator could be replicated at the other schools in Urbana mentioned above. At UMS there are 2 computer labs with ~ 42 computers in total with good broadband connectivity. UHS has ~ 60-70 computers in their facility. The IT coordinator for the Urbana schools stated that the fiber connectivity broadband speed for the schools mentioned is 100 mbs. No information is available with regard to the Early Childhood facility.

Neighborhood Center

The Urbana Neighborhood Connection Center, directed by Janice Mitchell has an ambitious plan to create a public access center program that includes weekend programs at the Champaign County Administrative Offices at Brookens located at 1776 East Washington St as well as the neighborhood center on East Main Street. This program has been in existence for 8 years but just recently acquired the Main Street building. The primary population is student based but also includes interest in expanding services for the adult population of African American, Hispanic and underserved populations focusing on the residents of the East Main Street neighborhood. Currently 50-70 students attend the Center this summer to improve their math, literacy and understanding of arts. There are plans for 9-10 Broadband computer stations at the Neighborhood Center. The student enrichment program has been supported by the United Way and the City of Urbana. Approximately 15 students attend the programs available at Brookens on the weekend. Specific information about the planned public access center is limited but it can be assumed that presently there is only a minimum of infrastructure and equipment installed.

The following specific information was collected for potential grant sites: Leal School (LS); Urbana Middle School (UMS), Urbana High School (UHS) and the Urbana Neighborhood Connections Center (UNCC). The responses for the public focus on Hispanic and African American audiences for the Neighborhood Center and for primarily Hispanic audiences for the schools. Of course the PACs in the schools would serve their student and parent populations if staffing was available.

Public Availability

Will your facility be available to all members of the general public, or a specific population only? Please explain. If you charge membership dues or other fees for the population you are proposing to serve, please explain how these charges are consistent with the public interest.

Schools and UNCC will make the facilities available to all members of the general public without any membership charges with a special focus on Hispanic and African American residents.

Restrictions on Center Use

If the use of your center(s) is restricted to certain purposes, please identify those and explain the reasons for the restrictions.

In terms of this project there would not be restrictions related to certain purposes for all the groups mentioned above.

Accessibility

Please describe the ways in which your center(s) will be accessible and welcoming to people with disabilities.

All schools and the center will be accessible and welcoming to people with disabilities. Computer facilities will need to be upgraded accordingly for the visually impaired as well as other disabilities and conditions.

Center Locations.

What is/are the location(s) of your new/expanded Public Computer Center(s)?

This information has been provided in the summary above.

Summary of Demand for Proposed Public Access Centers

Availability information	Leal School	UMS	UHS	UNCC
Current Open Hours Weekday	7:30 am – 4 pm	7:30 am – 4 pm	7:30 am – 4 pm	3 pm - 7 pm
Current Open Hours Weekend	None	None	None	3 pm - 9pm
Proposed Open Hours Weekday	Same as current plus open when there are afterschool activities	Same as current plus open when there are afterschool activities	Same as current plus open when there are afterschool activities	3 pm – 9 pm
Proposed Open Hours Weekend	6-8 pm and expanded if there is a demand	6-8 pm and expanded if there is a demand	6-8 pm and expanded if there is a demand	Noon – 9 pm
Current Broadband Workstations	24 for students but none for parents	40 for students but none for parents	60-70 for students but none for parents	N/A
Proposed Broadband	Parent Resource	Parent Resource	Parent Resource	10

Workstations	Center ~ # 3-5	Center # N/A	Center # N/A	
Current Facility Broadband Speed	100 mbs	100 mbs	100 mbs	N/A
Proposed Facility Broadband Speed	Same as current	Same as current	Same as current	100 mbs
# of persons in service area	110 students 60 families	62 students and 35 families	36 students and 20 families	70 students served during summer, but no adults currently served
# of persons served weekday (current)	N/A	N/A	N/A	50-60 students in summer months
# of persons served weekend (current)	None	None	None	15 students
# of persons served weekday (proposed)	Would like to develop pilot program and expand	Would like to develop pilot program and expand	Would like to develop pilot program and expand	65 students and 30 adults
# of persons served weekend (proposed)	Would like to develop pilot program and expand	Would like to develop pilot program and expand	Would like to develop pilot program and expand	50-60 students and 25 adults