

Text for CU BTOP

UFL

Deb Lissak wrote on Feb. 4:

I would welcome another opportunity to secure funds for public computing centers. From the use we see here, the public need is great. With the help of the Community Informatics students we are making some progress, but funding and coordinated local efforts would make a big difference.

Champaign Libe

Marsha Grove wrote on Feb. 5:

At our Main Library and Douglass Branch in the first six months of our fiscal year, we have had 86,000 uses of library public computers, which is a 7% increase over the same period last year. We have seen more people using our computers this past year to search for jobs, fill out job applications, and prepare resume.

Our current goal is to hopefully with funding from big broadband to expand the number of public computers at Douglass from 10 to 20 (includes a need to remodel for this area) and add laptops at both the Main Library and our Douglass Branch.

Health

Data without use is Data without value

by Elaine Hicks

Access to the Internet and technology skill development assures community use of health data to improve individual health. It enables the local public health department to plan and implement health promotion policies and programs, and report communicable disease and other health indicators to the state health department, and assure that current health data are made available to professionals, community-based organizations and individuals alike.

The Community Health Informatics Project is a campus-community public health data pilot project funded by the UIUC Chancellor for Public Engagement to make health data available to the community. The project unites the Champaign-Urban Public Health District (C-UPHD) with Applied Health Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Master of Public Health programs and students, creating a sustainable framework for collection, management, and community use of health data while preparing UIUC MPH students to contribute to the public health workforce. It builds sustainable partnerships for two data projects: the Online Health Database and Health Map Online.

The Online Health Database makes local health data available to community-based organizations to describe, address, and evaluate health promotion programs. Applied Health Sciences (AHS/ MPH) students will develop county- level public health data resources; develop a strategy for selecting key health indicators; provide guidance for efficient, sustainable methods for measuring the key indicators; and prepare a document describing the project and how it could be a model for Illinois counties and the nation.

Health Map Online is a valuable tool for public health emergency planning and response which links geographic data to other information such as vaccine clinic announcements. It is a section of the C-U PHD website designed with the expertise of UIUC Geographic Information Systems and Spatial Analysis Laboratory. Health Map Online provides access to maps showing facilities, locations, disease distributions, and a variety of other features about the natural and built environment and community. This data improves public health emergency planning and response and enhances the value of information for the community. Veterinary Medicine (DVM/MPH) students will develop linkages to key partner or potential partner agencies, improve the user interface for two databases, and audit electronic content.

In both cases, UIUC informatics techniques and expertise will make. Project managers will seek external funding for major research projects that leverage this framework.