



Vol 2 Number 1 | January 2011

Welcome to the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) Update! This regular e-mail will provide recipients with information on the program, events and training, tips, and project spotlights. For more information on BTOP, please visit [www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa) and [www2.ntia.doc.gov/management](http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/management).

## ★ Program Update

### BTOP: A Look Back, A Look Ahead

The following blog posting by National Technology and Information Administration (NTIA) Chief of Staff Tom Power was posted on the BTOP website on December 14. The full "Expanding Broadband Access and Adoption in Communities Across America" report is posted at [www.ntia.doc.gov/reports/2010/NTIA\\_Report\\_on\\_BTOP\\_12142010.pdf](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/reports/2010/NTIA_Report_on_BTOP_12142010.pdf).

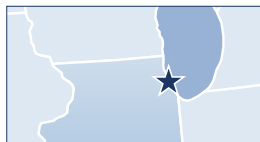
As we approach the end of the year, it is a fitting time to reflect on what we've accomplished with BTOP and the work that lies ahead. Today we're issuing a report that provides an overview of BTOP grants, highlighting illustrative projects in each category—infrastructure, public computer centers, and sustainable broadband adoption initiatives—and discussing the benefits to various stakeholder groups, including schools, small businesses, people with disabilities, the unemployed, and seniors, to name a few.

Though we are proud of what we have achieved—quickly building a solid grant program from the ground up, performing thorough due diligence on an avalanche of applications, and awarding grants to more than 230 strong proposals—the projects we awarded are a testament to the hard work and ingenuity of grantees, many of whom worked with partners throughout their communities to create innovative solutions to their local broadband needs.

But now is when the rubber hits the road. As the report makes clear (and to continue the metaphor), a lot is riding on these investments—not simply improved broadband access and adoption but also greater economic opportunities and advancements in education, health care, and public safety. We are pleased that BTOP projects are making good progress; we've seen groundbreakings for infrastructure projects, new and upgraded public computer centers serving the public, and training programs underway. There is much more to be done, however. NTIA is now focused squarely on strong oversight and providing the necessary technical assistance to grantees. Given all that's at stake, we are determined to see that these projects are completed on time, within budget, and deliver the promised benefits to the communities they serve.

## ★ Project Highlights

In Quarter 3 Project Performance Reports, a selection of projects reported the following community outreach activities and key milestones:



**City of Chicago** hired 25 new employees as FamilyNet Center (FNC) coordinators and Digital Youth Network Mentors, launched its website, and held technology and job skills training for 59 Digital Youth Summer Jobs (DYSJ) participants. The project plans to provide computers and training opportunities to more than 11,000 residents and 500 small businesses and non-profits in five disadvantaged neighborhoods. To learn more about this project, visit [www.humboldtportal.org](http://www.humboldtportal.org).



Government of **District of Columbia** opened a new public computing center at the Community College of the District of Columbia library on September 8, providing the center with 50 new computers, 20 laptops, and 2 LCD projectors. The project plans to upgrade equipment and improve connectivity at 24 public libraries and add computer centers at two recreation centers, three public schools, and one community college library. To learn more about this project, visit [www2.ntia.doc.gov/grantee/government-of-the-district-of-columbia](http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/grantee/government-of-the-district-of-columbia).



**Las Vegas-Clark County** Urban League opened 16 public computer centers, hired four full time and five part time employees as staff, and held several outreach events including open houses, a career fair, and a block party. The recipient intends to expand and create public computer centers in public housing developments and community and senior centers throughout the most economically disadvantaged communities in Clark County, NV. To learn more about this project, visit [www.nvpcc.org](http://www.nvpcc.org).



**New York State** Education Department opened several new public computer centers and began forging partnerships with development organizations. The recipient aims to provide 860 computers in 30 libraries and five mobile training centers and implement workforce development training classes across 41 economically distressed Upstate New York counties. To learn more about this project, visit [www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/nybbexpress/index.html](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/nybbexpress/index.html).



Public Utility District of **Pend Oreille County** promoted the project's purpose and progress to its community shareholders and constituents through several community outreach activities including organizing a booth at a county fair, designing informational brochures, updating the project's progress on the Pend Orielle's website, and creating magnetic ARRA logo signs for contractor vehicles. This infrastructure project plans to bring high-speed Internet to underserved areas of Pend Oreille County in northeastern Washington State and serve more than 3,200 households, 360 business, and 24 community anchor institutions. To learn more about this project, visit [www.popud.com/cns.htm](http://www.popud.com/cns.htm).

NTIA encourages all recipients to implement outreach activities and events in your project communities and keep us informed by sharing details about any events, project milestones, and announcements. For directions on submitting materials, navigate to [www2.ntia.doc.gov/ManagementResources#resources](http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/ManagementResources#resources).

## ★ Events and Training

### January and February Training

NTIA will sponsor training sessions and drop-in calls in January and February to help recipients prepare, submit, and finalize the annual and quarterly PPRs through the Post-Award Monitoring (PAM) system. The following trainings are tentatively scheduled. Please look for e-mails regarding final dates and times.

- ▶ **Mid-January:** The PAM Team will walk Comprehensive Community Infrastructure (CCI) and State Broadband Data and Development (SBDD) recipients through the changes to the PPR forms and offer tips for submitting reports through PAM.
- ▶ **Mid-January:** The PAM Team will walk Public Computer Centers (PCC) and Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA) recipients through the changes to the PPR forms and offer tips for submitting reports through PAM.
- ▶ **January 25, 1 p.m.:** The BTOP CCI team will host an Open Forum to answer recipient questions about filling out and submitting the quarterly and annual PPRs. Reports are due on January 30, 2011.
- ▶ **February 8, 1 p.m.:** The BTOP CCI team will host an Open Forum to answer recipient questions about how to finalize quarterly and annual PPRs. Reports must be approved by February 28, 2011.

### ARRA Reports Due January 14

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) requires all BTOP award recipients to submit reports with metrics on a wide range of data elements to <https://www.FederalReporting.gov> no later than 10 days after the end of each calendar quarter. Due to the New Year holiday, the Quarter 4 ARRA Reports are due January 14, 2011. You should submit your report through <https://www.FederalReporting.gov>. The data submitted will be reviewed and then made available to the public on [Recovery.gov](http://Recovery.gov) to ensure BTOP fund utilization transparency and accountability.



## November Workshop Session Recap: Your Project and Stakeholder Participation

Round 2 recipients attending the November 9–10 workshop in Washington, D.C., learned about the opportunities created by stakeholder outreach. Karen Archer Perry from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Anne Neville from NTIA encouraged recipients to maximize project potential by embracing stakeholder engagement. Recipients shared ideas for developing a stakeholder outreach plan including identifying current and potential project supporters, identifying the relationship between supporters and each project, and developing tactics for encouraging stakeholder involvement. Attendees were seated by geography during the session to facilitate communication across communities, states, or regions.

In addition, copies of the updated Stakeholder Outreach and Sustainability Toolkit were distributed to all attendees. You can access the toolkit, along with news release, PowerPoint presentation, and fact sheet templates, on the BTOP website at [www2.ntia.doc.gov/ManagementResources#resources](http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/ManagementResources#resources).

## ★ Tip of the Month

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### PAM Tips: Quarterly and Annual Report Submissions

Both the Quarter 4 and Annual PPRs are due by Sunday, January 30, 2010. As the deadline for submission is on a weekend, we strongly encourage you to submit your reports early. Both reports should be submitted *via* the PAM system.

Please review the following submission guidelines:

- ▶ Create the appropriate report package. Once completed, the system will allow you to download the template. PAM will not accept other versions of the form.
- ▶ Complete ALL cells in the form and use “0” or “N/A” if there is no information available. Best Practice: If the form will let you type in a cell, data must be entered. If you can’t type in cell, it will auto populate when submitted.
- ▶ Do not fill in the signature portion of the form. PAM will auto populate all signature fields upon submission.
- ▶ Recipients must submit a filled in version of the downloaded template online. PAM will not accept any printed, signed, and scanned copies of the forms.
- ▶ Use your PAM login password (not the GOL authorization code) to authorize the submission of the report package.

In addition, please note the following changes regarding Q4 PPR and Annual PPR forms:

- ▶ Increased word limits will allow recipients to add more detailed information. The word limit is shown next to each narrative question.
- ▶ Recipients can enter up to nine digits in all number fields, with the exception of currency fields.
- ▶ For PPR report packages, the “Submit” button will be unavailable until the downloaded template is uploaded.
- ▶ **INFRASTRUCTURE/CCI ONLY:** Question 3 in the Annual PPR form was changed from three rows of text fields to one text box. The text box is limited to 600 words.
- ▶ **SBA ONLY:** The Quarterly PPR Question 4(a) includes an additional column that allows recipients to enter separate values for number of household and business subscribers.
- ▶ **SBA ONLY:** Do not need to enter data for 2.b-2.f. The form will be prepopulated to reflect this.
- ▶ **PCC ONLY:** Do not need to enter data for 2.b-2.e. The form will be prepopulated to reflect this.

For technical issues, please contact the PAM Help Desk at [BTOP@ntia.doc.gov](mailto:BTOP@ntia.doc.gov) or 202-482-2048.

For substantive issues, please contact your assigned Federal Program Officer.



## ★ New Online Resources

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The following materials and information were recently posted to the BTOP website. Hyperlinks that link directly to the materials are listed below.

- ▶ **Updated Recipient Guidance:** Instructions for Submitting Project Achievement Information, Photos, and Videos offer guidance for recipients on when release letters are required for photo submissions. [www2.ntia.doc.gov/files/instructions\\_submitting\\_event\\_and\\_progress\\_information\\_102610\\_final\\_2.pdf](http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/files/instructions_submitting_event_and_progress_information_102610_final_2.pdf)
- ▶ **BroadbandMatch:** BroadbandMatch has been re-launched as an online tool that allows Recovery Act grant recipients and other communities developing broadband projects and programs to connect with a variety of potential partners. <http://match.broadbandusa.gov/BTOPpartners/BPMhome.aspx>
- ▶ **Covenant and UCC1 Preparation and Filing Fact Sheet:** Information on how to prepare Real Property Covenants Reports and UCC-1 Financial Statements. [www2.ntia.doc.gov/files/BTOP\\_Covenant\\_and\\_UCC1\\_Preparation\\_and\\_Filing\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_\(FINAL\\_2010\\_11\\_24\).pdf](http://www2.ntia.doc.gov/files/BTOP_Covenant_and_UCC1_Preparation_and_Filing_Fact_Sheet_(FINAL_2010_11_24).pdf)

## ★ FAQs: Procurement

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### What procurement procedures are required for all BTOP recipients?

Under Federal law, all BTOP recipients are required to follow certain procurement procedures, including:

- ▶ Maintaining written standards of conduct governing the performance of project employees involved in the administration of awards and contracts. Specifically, be sure to avoid any potential conflicts of interest by employees, officers, or agents during the procurement process.
- ▶ Ensuring open and free competition. The bidder with the most appropriate proposal should receive the award. Be sure to avoid noncompetitive practices among contractors that can adversely affect competition or cause potential organizational conflicts of interest.
- ▶ Developing written procurement procedures and maintaining records and files that demonstrate details about procurements, including basis for contractor selection, justification for lack of competition when competitive bids were not obtained, and basis for award cost or price.

### When is competitive bidding for BTOP project services, construction, and equipment purchases necessary?

All BTOP recipients must be aware of and comply with Federal regulations governing procurement for project services, construction, and equipment purchases. However, requirements generally depend on the value of the procurement:

- ▶ **Procurements exceeding \$100,000 (for both construction and professional services):** Recipients must issue a request for proposal (RFP) and follow all standards required by Federal regulations, including the requirement to publicly advertise bid invitations and keep in mind the documentation requirements outlined above.
- ▶ **Procurements under \$100,000:** A formal RFP is not required and a request for quotes (RFQ) is adequate. We recommend you obtain three quotes from qualified entities.

### What are the distinctions between subrecipients and vendors?

BTOP grantees will need to determine whether the entity is a subrecipient or vendor for purposes of the award. Section 210 of Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 provides guidance that grantees may find helpful in determining whether a participant in an award is a subrecipient or vendor, setting forth characteristics for each. Please note: Many BTOP-funded projects are complex in scope and nature, with relationships that are difficult to define within the Federal regulatory framework. If there is a question about subrecipient/vendor determinations, we encourage you to contact your FPO for guidance.

**If you have any comments, suggestions, or ideas for the next issue of the BTOP Update, please submit them to your FPO. We look forward to hearing from you!**

