

Digital Equity Community of Practice Meeting

August 27, 2026

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes and Transcript

The Digital Equity Community of Practice met virtually on Thursday, August 27, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. Engagement and Operations Analyst Ms. Amanda Lee welcomed attendees and then instructed attendees to introduce themselves in the Zoom Chat box with their name, job title, and affiliated organization.

Housekeeping & Agenda

Ms. Lee reviewed a few housekeeping items, meeting norms, and the agenda items. The ASL interpreters and Zoom closed captioning were available throughout the meeting. Ms. Lee also mentioned that the meeting's recording, minutes, and transcript will be posted on the Broadband for All (BB4All) portal. She then shared an overview of the meeting agenda and introduced James Spencer, Broadband Administrative Manager.

Agenda items:

- Welcome
- CA Lifeline Home Broadband Pilot Program Update
- Regional / Local Digital Navigation Panel
- Digital Inclusion Training & Services
- Upcoming Grant Opportunities
- Digital Equity Resource Finder
- Future Meetings

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome

Mr. James Spencer, OBDL Broadband Administrative Manager, welcomed participants and provided community updates, including the NTIA Digital Equity Competitive Grant, LA County Digital Equity Roadmap, CPUC approval of nearly \$32 million to expand broadband access, and community feedback (highlighting areas of improvement). Mr. Spencer also reported updates on Digital Inclusion Partnerships, noting 55 organizational sign-ups as of August 25. Additional Digital Inclusion Partnership updates included eligibility requirements, resources being free of charge, the ability to sign up for multiple services, referrals from multiple partners, and shortening process to 24–48-hour for follow-ups.

Agenda Item 2 – CA Lifeline Home Broadband Pilot Program

Ms. Lisa Anthony shared the program's latest enrollment and implementation updates, noting that Connect to Communications was pending review, five additional internet service providers (ISPs) were pending in the onboarding and systems interface testing phase, and 13 providers were actively enrolling customers. As of August 18, the program had enrolled 20,239 new subscribers and processed 4,483 transfers, for a total of 24,729 subscribers. Ms. Anthony also highlighted information on the broadband only versus bundled broadband plans. Following the presentation, Ms. Aracely Hernandez facilitated a Q&A and shared program resources with participants.

Questions

Ms. Aracely Hernandez moderated the Q&A session. Ms. Lisa Anthony proceeded to address questions from the audience. The following meeting attendees asked questions:

- Maiten Maowreader-Utreras, Digital Equity for San Diego
- Phil Fowler, NU Communications Alliance

Agenda Item 3 – Regional / Local Digital Navigation Panel

Ms. Aracely Hernandez, OBDL Digital Inclusion Manager, introduced the Digital Navigators panel and highlighted regional and local digital navigation efforts. Panelists discussed their services and target audiences. Ms. Hernandez concluded the discussion by opening the floor for audience questions.

Digital Navigation Panel

- Eduardo Gonzalez, Co-Founder / Co-Executive Director, Rural Prosperity Center / Digital Navigators
- Sandra Winter, Executive Director, Senior Coastsiders
- Abraham Camez, Digital Navigator, Hoopa Valley Public Utilities District

Questions

The following participant asked questions:

- Larry Bonham, SoulFriends

Agenda Item 4 – Digital Inclusion Training & Services

Ms. Shawn Daugherty, Principal of the Broadband Equity Partnership, introduced the Digital Navigation Training & Services panel. She highlighted key initiatives and discussed how digital inclusion partners can leverage available resources to support digital navigation efforts.

Digital Inclusion Training & Services Representatives

- Marissa Canche, Director of Broadband Adoption, California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF)
- Sabrina Tam, Associate Director of Programs, digitalLIFT
- AJ Middleton, Senior Vice President of Impact, Human-I-T

DEMO: Resource Sign-Up Form

Ms. Daugherty also provided a live demonstration of the Digital Inclusion Partnership Resource Sign-up Form. She concluded by inviting questions and comments from participants and encouraging continued engagement.

Questions

The following participants asked questions:

- Andy Burn, Community Living Campaign
- Julie Aguilar, Building Skills Partnership

Agenda Item 5 – Upcoming Grant Opportunities

Ms. Aracely Hernandez provided a quick overview of upcoming funding and grant opportunities, beginning with a reminder of key application deadlines for several California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) programs, including the Tribal Technical Assistance Account, Broadband Adoption Account, and Broadband Public Housing Account. She shared QR codes directing participants to additional information for each program. Ms. Hernandez also highlighted two federal funding opportunities: the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program, with a new November 17, 2026 application deadline, \$540 million in available funding, eligibility requirements, and priority focus areas; and the Native Entities Grant Program, also due November 17, 2026, which offers \$250 million in funding through awards ranging from \$500,000 to \$2.5 million, requires a 10% match, and supports a range of eligible broadband and digital equity initiatives. She shared a QR code linking to additional information about the awards.

Ms. Hernandez then introduced additional funding opportunities, including the CPUC Digital Divide Grant Program R4, which has an October 30, 2026, application deadline, DDGP 3 grants for a total of \$200,000 funding

commitment, and a focus on gaps in broadband networks, affordability, access to personal devices and digital skills training. She also shared again that the Anthropic's Claude Corps Grant program, with a new January 2027 (second cohort), application deadline. QR codes were provided throughout the presentation to direct attendees to additional program information and application resources.

Agenda Item 6 – Digital Equity Resource Finder

Mr. Luke Ivazian, Engagement & Operations Analyst, provided updates on the Digital Equity Resource Finder (DERF), noting an increase of 10 organizations and 54 locations since the previous reporting period. He also highlighted updates to the Digital Equity Outreach Toolkit, including its multilingual toolbar, outreach resources, and step-by-step instructional videos designed to support community engagement and encourage audience utilization.

Agenda Item 7 – Future Meetings

Ms. Amanda Lee briefly announced that the next Community of Practice meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 24, 2026, from 10:30 a.m. to noon. She concluded the meeting by sharing several ways for participants to stay connected with the California Department of Technology's Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy, including a QR code to subscribe to Broadband for All email updates, a link to the Broadband for All portals, and contact information for future inquiries.

CDT Office of Broadband and Digital Literacy stayed to check for any final questions. Ms. Lee thanked participants and presenters for their engagement and partnership before adjourning the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Questions

The following participants asked questions:

- Barry Boyd, Sacramento Environmental Justice Coalition Organization (Sac-EJC.org)
- Alyssa Baumgart, City of Vacaville - City Manager's Office

(The recording and presentation slides from the meeting will be posted on Broadband for All portal.)

Transcript

Thank you. Good morning, everyone. Thank you all for being here. We will start the meeting shortly. Good morning, and welcome to the August 27 Community of Practice meeting, where we aim to foster alignment, coordination, and collaboration within the statewide digital equity ecosystem. On behalf of the State of California and the Department of Technology, we thank you for being here. Please use the chat box to share your name, job title, and affiliated organization as more folks are coming in. Before we begin, a few housekeeping items. Next slide, please. Presenters, please cue Ricki to advance your slides. Select side-by-side speaker mode for the best viewing experience when slides are shared, and for visibility of the ASL interpreters. Closed captioning is available by selecting "CC Closed Caption" on your toolbar, and select "Show Subtitle." If you cannot find it, please click the icon with three dots for more options. Please note there is time allocated for questions. Use the Q&A box to type your questions related to that portion of the agenda while the speaker is presenting. Use the raise hand icon on Zoom, or star 9 if you're calling in by phone, and come off mute or video to participate. Chat will be off while the presenters are speaking, so that no questions are lost in the chat. Chat will be available when prompted. This meeting is being recorded. We will be posting the recording, slides, and transcripts of this meeting to the Broadband for All portal. Use the QR code listed on your screen, or click on the link in the chat to access the post-meeting materials from past events. Because of this, AI note-taking bots are not permitted and will be removed from the meeting. Next slide. Because we want to encourage bi-directional conversations and active participation, we wanted to state some baseline understandings here that only questions and comments on agenda items will be... can be addressed. The chat will be monitored, but only to ensure that disruptive behaviors are not tolerated. We don't think it's going to be a problem, but individuals with disruptive behaviors will be removed from the meeting. Next slide, please. Today's agenda will begin with a welcome from Broadband Administrative Manager, James Spencer, and updates on the California Lifeline Home Broadband Pilot Program. Next, we will feature a panel on regional, local digital navigation. Then, CDT will host a roundtable discussion with our new digital inclusion partners, focusing on digital navigation training and services. Afterward, we will provide a brief demo on how to sign up using the Digital Inclusion Partnership Resource Sign-up Form. Last on the agenda are CDT OBDL updates on upcoming grant opportunities, the Digital Equity Resource Finder, and future meetings. Next, I'll hand the mic over to Broadband Administrative Manager, James Spencer.

Yeah, thank you, Amanda. Welcome, everyone, and thank you for joining. I know we have a lot to cover in a short period of time today, so we can skip to the next slide, please. So, as we start today, there have been some recent highlights and updates that we want to share. The first is that, in case you haven't heard, there was a successful court challenge on the competitive grants. Based on everything we're hearing, the NTIA is going to move forward with those sometime at the end of this year or early next. There's a lot of things in motion, but Aracely will provide updates on this as we get more information to share. The second thing is the County of Los Angeles. Congratulations to them for finishing their Digital Equity Roadmap. LA County has been a great partner in the state's digital equity effort, and we appreciate working with them. We're also really happy to share that the Public Utilities Commission approved nearly \$32 million to expand broadband access. This includes several grants in the Broadband Adoption Account for over \$7 million, and a handful of grants for the Public Housing Account for almost \$600,000. This is great news. These are the grant programs we have been communicating and raising awareness of in these ecosystem meetings. Next, we're going to review some of the community feedback, because we are always looking for ways to improve, and then I will give you an update on the digital inclusion partnership resources. Next slide, please. So, I do want to thank everyone for adding your feedback during the registration process. We do want to highlight some new suggestions for improvement. The first two relate to getting registration information, agendas, etc., out early. We will do our best to do that. We do appreciate the focus on accessibility for the next two. So, for providing accessible copies of materials, the materials are all remediated before they are posted online. I don't know if we can offer simultaneous interpretation, but through Zoom, you can get closed captions in whatever language you choose. I will also add that the Broadband for All webpage has Google Translate function embedded, so the content is available in multiple languages. For one-on-ones, we do host a lot of one-on-one meetings. If you think it would be helpful, you can reach out using the contact info at the end of the program. Aracely is going to share some information on the AI literacy grants coming up later. We do think sub-focus groups are a good idea. And then in terms of access to tools and resources, this is kind of a good transition to my next slide. So, during registration, we asked which organizations would like to take advantage of free digital navigation resources or training. An overwhelming amount said yes. Some said no, 9 were still unsure. So, we're going to focus a lot of today's meeting on how you can utilize these resources that we negotiated with our partners. Next slide, please.

So, as far as digital inclusion partnerships themselves, we're really encouraged by the 55 organizations that have already signed up. Because a sign-up can include multiple partner organizations, this is the breakdown we are tracking for what tools and resources organizations want to utilize. You will hear more about how to sign up a little later on, and can we go to the next slide, please? So, before I finish the updates and highlights section, just a quick reminder, only governments, subdivisions, and nonprofit organizations are eligible to utilize these resources. The resources are completely free to use. As I did point out on my last slide, one organization cannot sign up for a number of services, which means we are referring you out, and you will receive a follow-up from multiple partners. And also, finally, we have continued to work with our partners to shorten the time between when you sign up and follow-up. So, if you do sign up, please be on the lookout for a response from the partners. That does conclude my update. Back to you, Amanda.

Thank you so much, James. A lot of work being done throughout the state. So next, I'm pleased to bring on Lisa Anthony and Loi Nguyen to speak on the California Lifeline Broadband Program. Welcome, Lisa.

Good morning, thank you, Amanda. So I am here with you today. I'm gonna give our Broadband Pilot Program update for the CPUC, and my colleague, Loi, is here to assist with any questions that come in. So if I can get the next slide, please. Okay, perfect. So, I am going to start by giving you an update on where we are with onboarding service providers to participate in the pilot. To date, we have received 19 advice letters from providers wanting to participate. There is only one that is still in a pending review status. 13 are currently now actively enrolling customers, and we have 5 that have been approved, but are in the onboarding phase. So, once they're approved, they have to connect with the TPA and, onboard their... get their systems in order, go through a testing to make sure everything is syncing and working correctly between their system and the TPA, and they also have to get their marketing materials approved by the CPUC. And once those items are completed, they'll be approved and can start enrolling customers. So those 5 are still in that process. Next slide, please. Perfect. So, as of last week, August 18th, we have a total of 24,729 individuals that are enrolled in the Broadband Pilot Program. Still seeing very strong... the, the enrollments are being driven by new subscribers versus... so it's 82% coming in as new customers versus 18% that were transfers. And just a refresh, or if anyone hasn't been a part of these in the past, transfers are individuals that were already on Lifeline and receiving a discount on either their wireline or wireless

service, and they decided to transfer that discount over to the Broadband Pilot. So I think it's really positive that 82% are new and were not previously receiving this discount. And you can see that we are still more heavily weighted, where broadband-only service seems to be the driver between broadband-only versus bundled broadband, but that is narrowing. The gap between the two are narrowing as time goes on, so about 66% are in broadband-only service plans. That's with 16,279 individuals versus 34% in bundled broadband plans equating to 8,450 customers. Early on, we were seeing that more of an 80-20 split, so as time goes on, it does seem to be closing that gap a little bit. And next slide, please. Okay, so last meeting, there were some questions around which plan seemed to be the most popular within the service providers, and I said I would take that back, and to give you a little bit of context here, when a service provider is enrolling a customer into broadband only or bundled broadband plans. That's kind of the level that we see drilled down to at the TPA, so we can... we collect that data for what service tier they're in, but we don't actually see the plan. So, we did go to the service providers and poll them on what seems to be their most popular plans, so what I am presenting to you here today is not a full scope, by any means of all the plans with all the providers. You can see there's just a handful here. These are the ones that we were able to hear back from between the last meeting and now, on what seemed to be their most popular plans, but it gives you a really good scope because the providers here are accounting for about 75% of the population, so you can see what does seem to be very popular between the bundled and the broadband-only plans. I'm not going to go through each line item for sake of time, but you will have access to this slide and can look at it more closely. But I will call out Comcast Xfinity is currently the... the... has the bulk of providers, so under broadband-only plans, they have about 73% of the population currently, and then in bundled broadband plans, they have about 62%. So you're getting... just looking at their plans, you're getting a really good idea of what seems to be very popular. Under their broadband-only plan, it's the Gigabit BB for broadband, with 1,000 download, 35 up. And then their Internet Essentials Plan, which is 75 download, 10 up. And then under... jumping down to that bundled broadband plan, their gigabyte broadband, 1000... same speed, 1000, down, 35 up, with limited wireless, and then a 300 MVPS broadband, 300 down, 35 up, also with unlimited wireless. So those are their two most popular in both. And the last slide, please.

Alright, well, thank you so much, Lisa. Always appreciate your time and thank you for joining us and providing monthly updates on the California Lifeline Home

Broadband Program. We do want to open up the floor for folks to ask any questions that they may have, specifically related to the California Lifeline Home Broadband Pilot Program. I do see there is already one question that came in through the Q&A. Question is, are former Cox customers eligible now that the Cox Spectrum merger is complete?

Let me try. So any customer that are eligible to, that meets the qualification to be enrolled into the Lifeline Program can participate. So I'm not sure if that answered the question, if the service provider is currently participating in the Broadband Pilot Program, consumers are eligible to sign up with those participating providers.

That's correct. There are some eligibility requirements, right, and the provider has to be participating in the Lifeline Program, and so it's not necessarily automatic. Great. Any other questions from folks? Feel free to use the Q&A chat box, or feel free to raise your hand and come off mute if you have any questions, specifically to this segment. Okay, I do see a question that just came in. It says, are there any programs for helping us as an emerging tribal broadband provider, become qualified?

Yeah, we had establish a resolution, T17903, back in February to establish a process for local agencies, that also includes tribal, to follow that established process to participate in the Broadband Pilot Program. And if you want to, you can contact myself offline, and I can meet with you and provide additional resources to help you along.

Okay, thank you, and we'll share that information. Just want to encourage folks to ask any additional questions if you have any. Raise your hand, or come off mute. Okay, well, looks like we don't have any questions, so, we'll continue to provide updates at next month's Community of Practice. Thank you again, Loi. Thank you, Lisa, for joining us, and looking forward to next month.

Thank you.

Thank you both. Now, we are going to transition into our Regional/Local Digital Navigation Panel, so go ahead and take it away, Aracely.

Thank you, Amanda. So yes, for the next portion of our presentation, we will have a panel discussion highlighting regional and local digital navigator work that's happening on the ground. As you all know, a major focus of the State Digital Equity Plan is to increase the number of digital navigators and to support

digital navigation programs throughout the state. We know digital navigation comes in many forms, and digital navigators are trusted messengers. Equity barriers such as access to affordable connectivity, devices, as well as digital skills. So some of these individuals come directly from the community that they serve, such as social workers, there's also promotores, educators, librarians, as well as other human services and community workers who also serve as digital navigators. I'd love to invite our panelists who are joining us here today. We have Eduardo Gonzalez, Sandra Winter, and Abraham Camez, who are joining us, for this section, so I'd like to encourage you all to please turn on your camera, your mic, and, go ahead and introduce yourself. So let's go ahead and start with, with Sandi.

Hi everybody, my name is Sandi Winter, and I'm the Executive Director at Senior Coastsiders, which is an organization, a non-profit organization, that supports older adults on the San Mateo County coast.

Great, thank you. And I'll pass it over to Abraham.

Good morning, Abraham Camez, Digital Navigator. I work with Acorn Connected, a division of the Hoopa Valley Public Utilities District out of the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation.

Thank you, Abraham. Eduardo?

Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Eduardo Gonzalez. I'm the Co-founder, Co-executive Director of the Rural Prosperity Center and Digital Navigators.

Great. Well, let's go ahead and get started. Let's just jump right into the first question. And we'll start with Eduardo, if that's okay. From your organization's perspective, can you tell us why digital navigation is so important?

So, our organization focuses on rural communities across California, so as the digital divide, or digital cliff, as many mentioned, has, you know, the programs have come in and tried to help and to end... to close that digital gap, and they're still obstacles to signing up for internet adoption. There's still obstacles in learning the digital skills that people need so that they can take advantage of the resources that are online. And as we're seeing this, the promotores model just made, you know, made it clear that a digital navigator model needed to be implemented to be able to not really hand-hold people, but really direct them to the right resources. A lot of people are seeing different scams online, so they don't know who to trust, and those trusted messengers are very key to us in

providing programs and rural communities, not only for adoption, for digital literacy, but also for devices. And so really learning and having those trusted messengers as digital navigators on the ground is very helpful for our organization, at least.

Thank you so much for that, Eduardo. Sandi, how about you? From your perspective, why is digital navigation so important?

So, the population we serve is older adults, and I think that there is a misconception that older adults don't want to learn how to use technology, but what we found during COVID is that when they had to use technology, they were early, you know, quick adopters, not early adopters. And I think we just haven't looked back since then. So, older adults need technology to be able to connect with their healthcare provider, to connect with their families, to do online shopping. And there's so many other instances where older adults can benefit by using technology, but having a digital navigator to show them how to do it, to keep them safe, that is really essential. And the one other thing for us is that we're in a pretty isolated area, geographically, on the San Mateo County coast, so we're in a rural environment, we are cut off from healthcare services, we lack transportation. So that is another reason why it's so important for our older adults to be able to safely and comfortably use technology, and that's why digital navigation is so important for our population.

Makes sense. Yeah, thank you so much for that. Abraham, how about you?

You know, I just have to second what, you know, my two co-panelists were saying. It mirrors everything that we're working with in Hoopa Valley. I'm in a unique position as I work for a tribally-owned ISP, one of the few digital navigators nationally that do. Additionally, you know, having that digital navigator in your community that's trusted by the community, I... I've been really fortunate to learn from them as well as to be able to teach them. I've been focusing a lot on the elders in our community because, you know, we... the same issues that you had mentioned, Sandi, you know, the trust, you know, they want to learn. We're not making the assumption that they don't want to learn, but, you know, having... sitting there working with the elders in our community, and they have that aha moment, it's... it's... it's really a good feeling. But you know, we...we want to continue the efforts that we're working in. I'm the sole digital navigator, we're looking for funding to get additional digital navigators, but I gotta give props to the folks that have been doing it all along, librarians, teachers, and such. But, you know, just in the last couple years, they've dubbed

that job title digital navigator, but...having that person in the community, it's got to be a trusted person, a person who knows the community and understands what that community needs in coming up with ways to address those.

Exactly, that's definitely the common theme around across the board, right? Trusted messengers, and just the importance of really building those relationships and ensuring folks are comfortable and familiar with technology. Thank you for that. Let's move on to the next question. Who are your clients that you serve, and what kinds of things do you help them with? Sandi, I'll go ahead and turn it over to you.

Right, so I've already mentioned we serve older adults who live on the San Mateo County coast, and we do all sorts of technology support. So for a long time, we've had one-on-one digital navigation, where we have a volunteer who will sit with an older adult who brings in their tablet or their phone, and we've helped them, older adults, get connected that way. But we've also expanded that to workshops and group classes about all sorts of things, AI, scam prevention, how to use your iPhone, how to use your Android, how to save your photographs, how to do online shopping, how to connect with family and friends on Zoom, and those kinds of things. And then, one of the things that we found recently our older adults needed was they actually needed in-home support as well. So they needed connection if they... how to get their printer to talk to their computer, how to get their remote... smart remote to work with their smart TV. So in addition to the one-on-one tutoring, we, and the workshops and the classes that we do, we also now do in-home technology support.

Beautiful. Eduardo, how about you?

Yeah, so, when we talk about digital navigators, I always compare ourselves to, you know, back in the days when you worked in an office, and the printer went down, and you were the accidental techie, that someone knew how to fix that printer, and then you were assigned that role for the rest of the years you worked there, and everybody looked at you. That's basically what, you know, our digital navigators have come. I think anyone in this call has been an accidental digital navigator. And now that's their role, and I think part of it is because, you know, Sandi's right, we not only teach folks how to navigate the internet, how to get online, how to create a Gmail account, anything from the beginner classes to how to use AI, you know, digital marketing, how to use AI for entrepreneurs. We're teaching right now in Kettleman City an AI for the workforce, and the... the...thing about digital navigators is that you have to kind

of get a glance of a little bit of everything, that accidental techie of how to show people how to use their phone. So, we were in class here on Tuesday, and the internet went down for the entire city, and so I said, well, take out your phones, and we'll use the data, you know, the hotspot on your phones. 80% of the people in the class didn't even know they had a hotspot on their phone. And so we were teaching that, and that became the class. Let's teach you how to use, you know, your hotspot so that you can power your laptop. And they did, and we ran the class like that, and people were like, I didn't even know I had this device for 3 or 4 years. I didn't even know I can use it as a hotspot. And so this, you know, digital navigators just have to shift as, you know, technology progresses, and then go back to some of the old technology and teach people so don't assume that people know things, you know, because you know it. And just, you know, expect that everybody's a beginner and that you need to explain them, and that sometimes you have to do that home visit and get invited to, you know, to the meal at dinner, and then after that, fix their Wi-Fi and help them how to connect their devices, right? So, yes.

There's always something to learn, definitely. Abe, how about you? Tell us a little bit more about the population that you serve, and what kinds of things you're helping them with?

So, in the beginning, our main was the Affordable Connectivity Program. As a small, tribally-owned ISP, when I came on board, we had about 280 customers. So, that was my primary focus, was that by the end of the ACP, we had all clientele that qualified for the program. We were able to get that credit through the ACP program, but then also, like, 95% of those folks, we were able to get them the devices through the program as well as a program, we move through the program, you know, I've had really good support with the General Manager, Linnea Jackson, the Broadband Manager, Matthew Douglas. A lot of people know him as Beggy. We've kind of been able to think outside of the box and kind of shape the program to what we wanted it. So that allowed for me to do drop-in basic device support, where we had the library in Hoopa, and we also opened up a small computer lab in the Family Resource Center in Willow Creek, where we had people that dropped in with basic device support, kind of like their own Geek Squad, like Eduardo had mentioned. But I also do home visits. And a lot of those clients are the elders, where I help them set up networks, and...Like Sandi had mentioned, you know, we're showing them how to do it, but the word that we like to use is empower. By the end of the visit, I'm having them show me how they can check their network status, their internet download

speed, how they can connect their devices. We utilize the Northstar online digital literacy training, as well as OATS for our elders in our community. Other folks that I've been able to work with in our community is through funding through NDIA. I developed a square training. There was no literature, there was no curriculum for Square, and that's card readers for small business owners. I was able to work with 8 small business owners in our community by creating the curriculum and getting them to accept card transactions, because I saw the need. I utilize it myself in the small side business that I do. So, we've been very fortunate that we've been able to work and engage all demographics in our community. And as we move forward, we are going to be working on creating a digital equity center here in Hoopa with the old PUD building that we have, and our goal...As we submit for the capacity grant again. We're gonna do a Tinker Lab 3D printers. We want to be able to allow for folks to come in, build computers. You know, and that's gonna be able to have all demographics again. Elementary through high school. Through, you know, the elders in our community as well.

It's amazing, really exciting to hear all the great things that you're all doing to support. I'm hearing. A lot of support with devices, how to use hotspots, even supporting small businesses, and even some home visits as well. Our next question is, is there a common profile for a digital navigator? What kind of training do you use, or what kind of training do they receive? Abe, I know you kind of touched on the training, do you want to just go ahead and talk a little bit more about that, and common profile for digital navigators?

I don't believe that, honestly, in my opinion, and this is, like I said, my opinion, that there is a common profile. I think for each community, it's gonna be different. It's gotta be...you know, a person that that community trusts. I have over 20 years working for the Hoopa community. I was a travel cop out there. I was the face for COVID during COVID. I was part of the incident management team, so people knew me, people trusted me, there was no issue with, you know, somebody inviting me into their home. So, to answer that question, I don't think that there is a common profile. I think it's got to be a person that's personable, that can engage with people, that's willing to learn, and if you don't know the answer to a question or a technical issue. You sit down with that person and say, well, let's find it out together. I joke around and I tell people that I have a bachelor's at YouTube University. If I don't know the answer, we go there, we find it together.

Sandi, would you like to go next?

Yes, so at this point, I want to give a shout out to Kami Griffiths from digitalLIFT. We partnered with them. They were CTN, Community Tech Network, back in January 2023 on the Access to Technology Grant. And up to then, we had only had these one-on-one volunteers, but partnering with Kami and her team, and Sabrina call as well. They really help to empower us through a train-the-trainer model, and we through that grant funding, we were able to hire somebody as our digital literacy lead. So that person isn't on staff. They're an independent contractor. They get paid by the hour. But once we had somebody who was in charge of our digital navigation and training, we were really able to grow the program. So because we serve older adults, we use the So that foundation was essential, and we've gone on to really build and leverage that foundation. So, what we... the training that we do now is through AARP, they have what they call the Senior Planet Curriculum, and we now have several individuals within our organization who are trained on that, and the materials are fabulous. They have the most amazing curriculum. It's also in Spanish and Chinese, and we have a small Chinese population here on the coast, and so our community liaison who speaks Mandarin has done the training as well, so she's able to give these classes to older adults in Mandarin as well. So I would say that we had a the partnership with DigitalLIFT CTN helped us to feel confident enough that we could do this in a bigger way, and since then, we've been really partnering with Senior Planet and the AARP.

Thank you so much for that. Eduardo, I'll turn it over to you.

Yeah, so our digital navigator training is in conjunction with CETF, so Sunne McPeak, who's the Executive Director, and I see Marissa Canche on the call, so I want to give a shout out to her, because we... a combination of, you know, putting our thoughts together and making this digital navigation... it's called the Digital Navigator California training, and so it's certified through, through Chico State as a digital badge that you can put on your LinkedIn and so on. So you take the modules through CETF training, and it can be in English or Spanish. We led most of ours in Spanish, throughout 18 community-based organizations, all across California, from the border all the way to, to, you know, almost reaching the Oregon border as well. And so, you go through the modules and learn all, you know, the basic things that go with becoming a digital navigator. I think anyone can, you know, anyone can go through the training, but it's already a set training that CETF has, you know, tested out, you know, got it to work, and

basically made it an amazing training program, and so...I invited everybody to reach out to CETF and find out when those trainings are, so that we can get more digital navigators trained and certified, so under the California Digital Navigator badge. So, yeah, and I want to, you know, echo what Brian said about having a bachelor's or a master's in YouTube. I always tell people, I have a PhD in Google, and if you don't know something, I don't know it, we're gonna figure it out together, so...

Thank you all for that. I'm hearing, yeah, different resources that you're already using, and some of the platforms and training programs that, that are actually here today as well. Thank you all. We do have one final question before we open it up for folks to also join in and ask questions. My last question is, what resources would help organizations like yours and others wanting to start up or expanding digital navigator program? Eduardo, I'll go ahead and turn it over to you.

Obviously, everybody's gonna say funding, right? So we're gonna start there with that type of resource. But no, I think the opportunity is to really create a training that that is available in different languages, not only in language, but in culture. And so, you know, really understand what communities are serving, and the resources could be, you know, potential partnerships, school districts, libraries, you know, community-based organizations that are willing to partner and add some of those opportunities and those grants that they're writing. It might be a portion to, hey, as part of this grant, it touches a little bit on technology, so let's add a, you know, digital navigator training component to it that might be, you know, \$5,000 to \$10,000 or something. And so that, I think, you know, partnerships and resources can go a long way, and so that's something key for us.

Abraham?

Totally agree with what Eduardo said, partnerships, training, funding. But with some of those partnerships, we've got to think about, like, our anchor institutions, like for us in the Valley, would be K'ima:w Medical Center. You know, with the shift of everything being, like, online, as far as reordering meds, you know, telemed, stuff like that, you know, if you were able to partner with an anchor institution like a medical center to allow for some of the funding to come your way to my, you know, have, you know, train folks in the community, especially our elders and our community, to utilize the, online resources. So, just echoing what he said.

For that, and Sandi?

Yeah, I agree with my predecessors here. Funding, I think the thing that really helped us take our digital literacy program to another level was being able to have somebody whose sole job this was. So, to be able to have that independent contractor, that's her focus, her passion. And she's brought other people along with her, and we've been able to use grant funding. You know, I think success breeds success, so when you have a successful program, we've been able to look back at the Access to Technology Grant that we did with CTN, digitalLIFT, and say, this is what we've already done, and we want to build on it. So, having a good foundation has allowed us to get additional funding, we're able to use the AARP curriculum, so we're in a really... Good place to be able to continue to grow this very important work.

Yeah, definitely the need is still there, and I'm hearing some commonalities in terms of, you know, what the needs are, training, resources, more partnerships, obviously more funding, and just that shared success is definitely important. Really want to appreciate all of you for, you know, taking the time today to share your perspective, you know, talk more about the role, the important role of digital navigators. And, you know, I do want to make sure that folks also have the opportunity to ask any questions, so folks, you know, feel free to use the chat, the Q&A, or, you know, unmute yourself, raise your hand, so that we can call on you to engage in this conversation with our digital navigators. Looks like they just opened up the chat if you want to engage through the chat box or through the Q&A.

Aracely, if I may ask a question? Sorry, I didn't raise my hand. Sandi, Abraham, you both mentioned doing in-home services. And what does that look like? You know, do you typically meet them at a class or in the community, or how are you connected to these people who, you know, where some of the in-home services would be preferred?

So, for me, I'll get a call for device support or a network issue. Working within a tribe, we wear many hats. We're... I don't know if you saw the picture that I posted, I didn't do a headshot, that's me helping my guys on the tower. So I'll get a call, customer support role. I'll make an appointment with that person, I'll go to their house. And, like I said, by the end of that call. I'm having them show me what I came to help them with the troubleshoot, so I'm empowering them to solve that issue before we leave. You know, sometimes I get a call back, but that's what a in-home... setting up networks, router support calls, and such.

I mean, for our Instagram... Sorry, our in-home program There are older adults who are known to us, and all of the volunteers that we send to do these home visits, we have a pretty rigorous background screening process, and they also get training on the California Department of Aging information and information security training, and there's training on, Abuse Prevention of older adults, which includes Scams, and... and so we... before we send an old... a volunteer into the home of an older adult. We check references, we do background checks, we make sure that they have training about what the rights and responsibilities are of dealing with a potentially vulnerable population.

Fantastic, thank you.

Thank you. I do see a question that came in specifically for Eduardo. The question is, does PhD in Google mean you can help folks set up AI models using Gemini?

And the answer is yes. We've actually been doing that in one of our advanced classes, and so, you know, I'd be surprised how many people want to do that, especially for the workforce component. So those questions come up, and we do help them. So anything from learning how to right-click a mouse, left-click mouse, to setting up these specific models, or GPTs, that we call them. Yep.

Yeah, definitely, there's a lot of interest in AI training these days, and just the importance of integrating that into any existing digital literacy training curriculum. So, yeah, everyone is definitely interested in making sure that, that continues. Great, let's see, just want to make sure that we continue to leave the floor open for any questions. If not, we can go ahead and wrap up. So, if anyone has any lingering questions, feel free to raise your hand, or just unmute yourself and chime in.

I put my email up in the chat, too, in case anybody has any follow-up questions, feel free to reach out.

Great, thank you so much. I don't see any additional questions. Again, want to thank you all for joining us today. This has been a really great conversation, really, you know, excited to hear all the great work that continues to happen on the ground with the support of digital navigators and just the importance of that role. You know, there's multiple statewide, national, and local nonprofit entities that are doing, you know, great work across California and the digital inclusion space through the support of digital navigators, so we definitely want to

encourage that. And, again, thank you for being here today, and I will pass the mic back over to Amanda to introduce the next section. Thank you all.

Thank you so much. Thank you, Aracely, Abe, Sandi, and Eduardo. We know how important digital navigation training, and if any of you are like these folks, or your community is like any of these organizations, I'm going to call on Shawn Daugherty to facilitate a panel with our digital inclusion partners to show how to leverage these resources to support your digital navigation efforts. Shawn?

Great, thanks, Amanda. And I see that Marissa, Sabrina, and AJ are being spotlighted, and we'll come on in a moment. And so, we just heard from three exceptional digital navigation programs, and now we're going to turn to digital navigation training. How did the digital navigators and their programs, you know, take some training, become certified, and then we're going to also hear from a secondary panel on digital navigation. broader services, digital navigation services kind of offered outside of an organization. And so, excited to have our three digital navigation, or I'm sorry, digital inclusion partners to speak, for this next portion of the Community of Practice. We have Marissa Canche with CETF, Sabrina Tam with digitalLIFT, and AJ Middleton with Human-I-T. And specifically around... we're gonna start off with the digital navigation training, portion of the conversation, and, as you all might recall, CDT has committed to training 300 new digital navigators as part of this digital inclusion partnership that we have. So, I'm excited to have this conversation for folks to learn more about these programs, and if, again, if you or your organization are interested, at the end of this conversation, we'll show the resource sign-up form and how you can find out more information for these free resources for your organization. So, Marissa, Sabrina, thank you. I don't know if you just want to do a quick introduction of yourselves. Actually, why don't we introduce all three of you, and then we will kind of start with the digital navigation training portion. Marissa?

Great, okay, yeah, thank you so much, Shawn, and hello everyone, good morning. My name is Marissa Canche, and I'm with the California Emerging Technology Fund, also known as CETF, and I am the Director of Broadband Adoptions.

Fantastic. Sabrina?

Hey everyone, my name is Sabrina, and I'm the Associate Director of Programs at DigitalLIFT. We are an 18-year-old nonprofit. We do both direct services with

clients, and also supporting other nonprofits to build their own digital inclusion programs.

Fantastic. And AJ?

Awesome. Hello, everyone, good morning. My name is AJ Middleton. I am the Senior Vice President of Impact at Human-I-T, and super excited to be here to talk to you all.

Great, great. So when we talk about digital navigation, digital navigator training, you know, Marissa, let's start off, you know, kind of just, like, what is the CETF Digital Navigation Training Program? You know, is it online, in-person, hybrid, self-paced? You know, kind of what are some of those basics that people can expect?

Yeah, okay, great. So, as in the previous panel discussion, Eduardo Gonzalez mentioned that in partnership with both of our organizations, we developed a digital navigator program, excuse me, to prepare community-focused staff to identify, address the digital inclusion barriers that so many of our residents are facing. And so, our program is really designed to, so that we, CETF, can recruit, train, and support our CBOs, to serve as these digital navigator hubs. who are interested in having their staff become digital navigators, who will then move on to, you know, do the work that's involved in, you know, supporting community with these, by addressing these digital inclusion barriers that exist. Our program is an 8-module program. It is delivered with a live instructor, and it does take approximately 20 hours to complete. That includes the live training, that includes the pre- and post-digital navigator self-assessment, and there are some homework assignments that are offered in our training, as well as module assessments. And so, you know, part of our training has been certified, as Eduardo mentioned earlier, through CSU Chico, and so, we felt it was, you know, our responsibility to make sure that our navigators are fully, that when they go through the training... our training program, that they leave with a full understanding of how to be the most effective digital navigator. And so we implemented these assessments and different types of module exercises. So that when they complete the training, we can then, you know, provide that certification over to Chico, and they then issue the certification badge for our digital navigators. So it's been a very successful program. We launched it last summer, with a couple of different cohorts. We recently, as a result of that first round of training, we took a lot of the feedback that we received, and we recently refreshed our entire curriculum. Well, not entirely, but, you know, some

parts, added some parts, took away some parts, and so we're really, really proud of the product that we now have, that we are now implementing with our partners through the digital inclusion grant. Yeah.

Fantastic, great. And same question for you, Sabrina. You know, is it online, is it hybrid, in person? How does DigitalLIFT do their digital navigation for training?

Sure. So, our digital navigator training program is designed primarily for the frontline staff, volunteers, or others who provide digital support in the communities. And the core digital navigator training combines 6 hours of online, self-paced learning modules with a 90-minute live Zoom workshop and debrief with one of our instructors. So, I would say it's a hybrid. It's online, online, but some part is in synchronous, self-paced, another part, at the end is a scheduled workshop, debrief with our instructors. And there are additional add-on modules, also self-paced, available based on the client type that you'll be working with, or the type of digital inclusion services that you will provide in the community. And the idea is really to provide flexibility through self-paced learning, but also create an opportunity for the participants to ask questions, discuss real-life situations, and apply what they've learned during the self-paced modules.

Great. I'm gonna ask probably both of you to dive a little bit deeper into what those curriculum or those modules actually look like. So, Marissa, I know you just mentioned you kind of just revamped them a little bit, but you have 8 modules, and like, what are, you know, what are the titles? What can, you know, people who are interested in taking this training, what can they expect to learn? Is it just network setup, or as we've heard, you know, it's not just right-clicking and left-clicking a mouse, you know? Or instructing people on how to right-click and left-click a mouse. So, what do your modules contain?

So, yes, our eight modules start off with the basic, fundamental understanding of what a digital navigator is, and what type of services they will be offering the community that they serve. So we call that Digital Navigator Fundamentals. I think earlier, one of the questions to the panelists was, you know, what's sort of the typical profile of a digital navigator? And I love the answer that there really isn't a typical profile, that it really just depends on the type of community that you're serving. But a part of our curriculum is also addressing sort of those fundamental characteristics, such as patience and openness and willingness. And, you know, a digital navigator really has to be someone who is a troubleshooter, right? Someone who isn't going to take no for an answer, right? Who's resourceful. So, we cover, you know, basic things like that, from the

foundation of what it is to be a digital navigator. We move into another one of our really popular modules, which is cultural competency, and that is a really fun module where we explore what it... what culture means, and how we ourselves can do, probably a better job of, you know, bringing down those barriers that sometimes we all have when it comes to different cultures, and practice ways that we can do that. We then move into more, you know, the technical things around internet adoption, device acquisition. We do share our digital literacy curriculum in our digital navigator training, so we train the trainers how to deliver our curriculum when they are ready to offer those digital literacy classes. And then at the... we kind of round it out at the end with the details we, CETF are asking our partners when it comes to, grant management, CETF, I think everybody might know, we are, you know, sticklers when it comes to data and data gathering, and so the only way we can do that, especially through this type of program, is through our digital navigators. And so we ask them to, you know, use our system of data collecting, data sharing, and so we actually provide a training on how to do that. So yeah, it's a very well-rounded, sort of comprehensive, training that, yes, it does take about 20 hours, but I... I guarantee you, the 20 hours is a lot of fun. We get to know each other, and that's why I think I like this live, one-on-one training opportunity, because we get to know our navigators and, you know, have a really great time doing that.

Great. Yeah, and Marissa, just remind me, what languages is the training offered in?

Oh, good question. So, we currently offer it in English. There have been some requests recently for other languages, and so we're going to work on ways that we are going to be able to do that. Right now, we can probably offer it in Spanish, but like I said, there's some additional languages that are being requested that we'll have to figure out a way to do that.

Great. Awesome. And Sabrina, great to hear what languages, you know, DigitalLIFT provides their training in, but also diving a little bit deeper into what those modules and how DigitalLIFT approaches the training.

Yeah, so for our training, it's also English only at the moment, but yeah, same... similarly, we... here other languages may be needed, so we're working on that. But one thing we emphasize with our training is that it's not just about knowing technology. In fact, we don't expect our digital navigators to know the answer

to every tech question. What's much more important is knowing how to work with people and help them build their own confidence and skills. So, our core training starts with the role of digital navigator, and then goes deeper into practical skills, such as assessing a learner's needs. Providing learner-centered support, communicating with people who may have different levels of digital experience, and helping someone work through a technology problem, rather than simply doing it for them. Internet safety and responsibility is also a major component of the training. So for those who will be teaching digital skills in a classroom or group setting, rather than one-on-one support, we offer two modules. Specifically for this type of trainer, classroom trainer. We also have additional modules focused for staff who work with older adults in healthcare settings, libraries and for public benefit enrollment. So ultimately, we try to develop someone who to be patient, respectful, resourceful, and learner-centered digital navigator or trainer, whether they're helping someone one-on-one or teaching a group class.

Fantastic, fantastic. And also, I think that's a great question to kind of, end this conversation on, if there's any questions where folks would like to learn or have any more questions about the digital navigator trainings, is really, who is this training ideal for? You know, Sabrina, I think you just mentioned, you know, librarians or, people who maybe serve older adults, and Marissa earlier, I heard. you know, individuals within CBOs. So, Sabrina, like, who is kind of your target audience for your training?

It's really designed for anyone who helps community members overcome digital barriers. So that could be someone actually has the job title, digital navigator, but very often it isn't. It might be, yeah, HSM librarian, community health worker, social service staff member, case manager, volunteer, affordable housing staff member, or anyone at a community-based organization, like they hear questions, like, often hear questions like, can you help me with this app, or is this message a scam? How do I apply for this or that online? If you hear these questions a lot. You're good for this training.

Yeah. Marissa, probably similar?

Yes, I completely agree with Sabrina's response there. I would add that, truly, what it takes to be a successful digital navigator is to be community-focused. You know, through our program, I've, I've learned, because I provide the training to the digital navigators, and so I have seen a common theme, and the folks that are showing up to these trainings are individuals who want to see their

community improve. They want to see growth in their communities. They want... they know what's going on in their communities, and so they want to address those barriers and those, you know, difficult things that are happening. And so, I... I think that ultimately, yes. As Sabrina said, it's, you know, it's really for anyone who is community-facing, but who also has that passion to want to do better for their community. So, I would... I would just add that piece to it.

Fantastic, fantastic, great. And as you can see, you know, both these digital navigator trainings have some similarities and differences, you know, and, you know, when we were thinking about the partnerships, knowing that not everybody has, you know, is coming from the same place, where training online might be more accessible to them than in person, and things of that nature. So, we're pleased to be able to offer an array of training options. And so now we're gonna head over to the second part of this conversation, where we're going to focus more on digital navigation services, and this is going to be with AJ from Human-I-T and Marissa from CETF. And I like to think of this a little bit as both residents can access your services, but this can also be a little bit of a phone-the-friend situation. If a digital navigator, you know, maybe doesn't have the answer they are seeking, they can also call these resources as well. So, AJ, we'll start off with you. You know, like, how does your remote digital navigation service work? Is it a call center? You know, what type of, you know, things do, your support people deal with?

Sure. A call center is probably a great way to describe it, although I think it's so much more than that. We basically have a team of digital navigators that are available Via phone, yes, text message, and email. Really, what we want to do is, communicate with an individual that we're supporting in the method that makes the most sense for them. So we'll make all of those available, and our team of digital navigators, what we do is we are gonna support individuals in understanding what it is that they're trying to accomplish. What is their goal? What are you trying to do with technology? Are you trying to communicate with your family? Are you trying to go to school? Are you trying to further your... career, whatever it is that you're trying to do with that technology, great. We want to have that in the forefront the entire time. And then from there, understand where your gaps are. Do you currently have internet in the home? Do you have a device? Do you understand how to use those properly? Do you maybe have that and you just have technical support questions? Our team really wants to understand, you know, what those things are, so we can start filling those gaps. And what we do is we work on a one-to-one basis in getting

people connected to those services that are going to make the most sense for them. Whether that's a various different low-cost offer that may exist at their household, whether that's us providing them a free or low-cost device, digital literacy training, we have a variety of resources that range from computer basics, through AI, through very specific workforce development-type trainings that may be specific to whatever it is they're trying to accomplish. And then finally, the technical supports. Once we're able to give people those resources that we're talking about there, we want to make sure that they don't have any roadblocks or concerns that may stop them from being able to use the computer, the internets, or whatever it is, so we have a team They're ready to answer technical support questions that range from I don't know how to do this, or this isn't working properly, to this may actually be broken, and we can guide them through the necessary steps to either get a new device, something fixed, or just truly just guiding them through how to understand how to do whatever it is they're trying to do. So, ultimately, I'm available through a different... a variety of different ways, and we rely on partner organizations all across the state to refer individuals who are in need of this support to us, whether that's they currently have, you know, some type of program that may be a digital navigator-type program, but don't offer all the suite of services that I just talked about. We can be there to fill a gap, or they as an organization don't have a digital navigator program themselves. And they truly just want to refer their community who may need these resources. We are a place where we can support that community in order to receive these.

Great, and tech support, right? Not everybody has an Abraham that's available to come in-house, yes, very important. Marissa, kind of the same questions for you is, you know, would you cons... I think... CETF does consider it a call center, correct? And what are the types of services?

Yeah, we... exactly. We do have a remote call center, and it's staffed by nonprofit organizations from all over the state who have been trained to be digital navigators. We do provide that one-on-one support, especially for folks who are, either, you know, who are low-income or benefit-eligible households who most likely qualify for the low-cost internet offers. And so when they call into our call center, as very similar to what AJ just described, we conduct our intake, you know, our assessments to find out where the services for this particular, you know, individual is most needed. If it ends up being a... that they need to be connected to a low-cost internet program, oftentimes our call center agents will do do a three-way call with the individual on the line, and call into the ISP with

them so that we can essentially be their advocate while they are, you know, signing up for internet. We all know, we've all heard stories about providers who oftentimes try to upsell, you know, individuals into plans that, one, they can't afford, or two, they actually aren't interested in. So we have our navigators stay on the line with them, just to avoid things like that from happening. It also just kind of eases the nervousness or anxiety that an individual who, you know, is maybe a little bit uncomfortable with having that kind of interaction with a provider, they know that the navigator is there to help them through that process. In addition to that, you know, we also make referrals to digital literacy training classes and device acquisition. We send a lot of our folks over to Human-I-T for that, because, you know, we, that's one service we are not able to offer is actual device distribution, but we certainly have a list of referrals, other nonprofits who are in that refurbishing device business, and so we make sure to make those referrals out anytime our callers need that information.

Fantastic. And AJ, I think some, maybe nitty-gritty, you know, what hours are you open, what languages, you know, how can people access it? Is it online, a phone number?

Definitely, yeah. So there's a variety of different ways that individuals can access it, whether it's online. I'm happy to drop a link in the chat later, but if you go to humanita.org, you will find various ways to get ahold of our digital navigation team to really begin that process. People can call in directly, they can email us. They can text us. Any of those ways are a perfectly great way to start. We are open in terms of our digital navigators being available for support Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 5, Pacific. But, you can call us 24-7. You will actually get connected with a live person who can, at the very least, give you some introductory information, take your information, and get you connected with the right digital navigator. So that's available 24/7 at any point. We provide all of our supports and services in both English and Spanish, and are looking into some creative ways to really expand those languages beyond that, that may be needed in, you know, various different communities across the states, but at the very least, English or Spanish the entire time. And then when you talk with the digital navigator, they are both... they are, they are all bilingual, so you can theoretically start the conversation in English and it in Spanish if you would like, however you want to go about doing that. But Monday through Friday, but please reach out to us if you have an interested community 24-7, and then we will have our digital navigators. If you reach out in a time where they're not available, they will get in touch with you within the next business day to ensure

we get that... we get that process moving, and you get the support that you need... that you need.

Great. And Marissa, same question. When do you open, you know, languages for service?

Yeah, so our call center operates Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. We're also open on the weekends, so Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and we recently, one of our partner, grantee partners, has requested to, to man the call center on Sunday. So, very soon we'll be operating on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. I wish I had Patti, who is our Director of Call Center Operations on this call, because she could rattle off the list of languages that are available at our call center. I know it's pretty extensive, and that's basically a result of the call center agents are, you know, from nonprofit organizations all throughout the state. So, fortunately, you know, we do have access to different language capabilities. So, English, Spanish, I know, you know, Farsi, and other, all different kinds of languages. And like I said, I wish I had the list in front of me, but we do offer pretty extensive language capabilities for callers.

Great, that's fantastic. So, hold on for one second. We're actually going to bring up the broadband portal form. Ricki, if you can bring up the form so we can show people how they can actually go to the Broadband for All portal, and there is a resource sign-up form, so if they're interested in taking advantage of what they just heard about, or interested in signing up for it, so...Ricki, are you able to bring up the Broadband for All page live? Might not be able to, but...If you are, we can do a little bit of a live demo. If not, no problems. That was an image of it. You know, it asked for your organization name. Oh, here we go. I'm just moving too fast. Great, thanks, Ricky. So, right, this is our Digital Inclusion Partnership form. You can, see all of the, all of the seven organizations that we're working with through this program. And if you want to scroll down a little bit, Ricki, great, right? We're asking for organization name, website title, you know, basic information. And then if you want to scroll down a little bit, you're then able to sign up for what resources your organization would be interested in. You can pick as many as you'd like, or as few as you like, and then you'd hit submit, and then you would, you would then hear from the digital inclusion partners for the services that you've signed up for. So, if you sign up for more than one, you're likely to hear from more than one organization, but that's the form on the portal where if you're interested in these services, that you can get connected to it. So, thank you, Ricki. If you want to bring it back down, I think we have a

couple questions already waiting, but if other people have questions, feel free to raise your hand. And Marissa, you actually have two questions. The first one is from Andy Burns. Over what period is the 20 hours spread out?

Oh, great question! Okay, so how it typically works is, we have... we're... so we have different rounds of training going on all at the... all at different times, but basically, I think the easiest way to break it down is if you start class on Monday with Module 1, you will finish the entire program as long as you are consistent with taking the classes in, you know, that sequential order, by the following Friday. So basically, you know, two weeks, you'll complete the entire modules from 1 to 8, including the assessments and all of that, that's part of it.

Great. So it's, and I think, and this goes into the second, question that Julie Aguilar sent is, does live instruction mean in person, or is it Zoom?

Zoom. It's a virtual live instruction.

So people log in at a certain time, have a live instructor, and then complete those 20 hours, over the course of 2 weeks?

That's correct. And we do offer different schedules, so currently, we have, we're wrapping up our weekday daytime training, but I'm... I also just started a weekday evening training, so we... we've got different schedules. We are gonna add a Saturday schedule, a series, a Saturday series, where we'll, you know, we'll have training on a Saturday, just because we know people, you know, are busy during the week, so... They might need that as an option.

Fantastic, great. And another question has come in, Sabrina, for the DigitalLIFT Navigator program, is it certified by any school? Is there a digital badge offered? Is there a certificate? What does that look like?

Is not certified by the school, like the CETF, so if that is important to your organization, your team, definitely go with CETF. But you... the participant will go... after they complete the course, they will receive a certificate of completion from DigitalLIFT.

Fantastic. Great, and I think, Marissa, Julie actually has a follow-up question in the chat. For Saturday options, how many weeks would it be?

It would be 3 Saturdays.

Great. Great, great. Any other questions? I don't see any hands raised, but I, you know, the chat is open. Do I see one more? Okay. Andy says, I want to take one

of these courses. Don't we all? They, they do sound like fun, for sure. All right, well, Marissa, Sabrina, AJ, thank you for sharing more about your program. Again, if you, if you or your organization is interested, that we have dropped a link to the portal sign-up form in the chat. Please go and sign up, and...take advantage of these free resources. And with that, I think I'm gonna send it back to Amanda? Yes. Okay. Thank you.

Thank you so much, Shawn, and Sabrina and Marissa, and AJ for all of your wonderful work that you're doing for this community. Next, we're going to move on to upcoming grant opportunities with Aracely Hernandez.

Thank you so much, Amanda. So happy to be back. Thank you, Ricki, for moving on to the next slide. As James mentioned earlier, just recently, the PUC awarded over \$30 million to multiple organizations, and so we want to make sure that folks continue to apply for these rolling grant opportunities through the California Advanced Services Fund programs. The first one that I want to highlight is the Tribal Technical Assistance, since it is just right around the corner, with the deadline of October 1st. Again, this is specific for California tribes, with or without federal recognition to improve voice and broadband communications. The other two don't have a deadline until January 1st, but, you know, please use the respective QR codes if you are interested. And again, these are rolling grant opportunities, so you can submit your applications at any time. Next slide, please. The digital divide grant program, also by the PUC, is currently accepting applications for Round 4 to support rural and urban public schools and nonprofits. There's 3 grant opportunities here, \$100,000 for schools, and up to \$50,000 for nonprofits to address gaps in broadband networks, affordability, and devices. Again, there is a QR code on the right-hand corner. Next slide, please. Here we have a new grant opportunity. This is by the Mickelson Foundation. It's actually about to open up on August 31st, and it closes on September 15th. So it's a short window, but just want to make sure that folks are aware of the Digital Sparks grant opportunity to support organizations. That support California systems and address digital discrimination, digital inequities, and also increasing civic participation. Please use the QR code, it'll direct you to the application if you're ready to fill that out. And we can move on to the next slide, please. Here we have the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program. It has an updated deadline of November 17, and that's for grants ranging from \$500,000 up to \$2.5 million for broadband use, adoption, workforce, and technology upgrades. Next slide, please. Same thing with the Native Entities Grant Program. It has a deadline of November 17. There's up to \$250 million available. Grant ranges

from \$500,000 to \$2.5 million, again, for broadband use and adoption activities, including workforce development and technology upgrades. And then we'll have the last slide here to wrap up. This is for the Anthropic Grant Program, which is a \$150 million initiative to train and deploy young workers over 18 years of age to help nonprofits, to integrate AI tools and systems. This is the second cohort that they're currently hiring. The deadline to apply is January 2027, so please, you know, continue to spread the word and use the QR code here. For more information, and we will be sharing the slides in the upcoming weeks with the recording, if you are all interested in that. Thank you all so much, and I will pass it back to Amanda.

Thank you, Aracely. Next, I'd like to bring up my colleague, Luke Ivazian, to discuss the Digital Equity Resource Finder.

Thank you, Amanda. Next slide, please, Ricki. As you can see on this slide, the Digital Equity Resource Finder continues to expand, and I'm excited to share that we've hit two significant milestones this month. We've now surpassed over 250 organizations in 1,000 locations, with 259 organizations and 1,003 locations, as you can see there, as of August. This growth reflects a diversity of partners contributing to the Resource Finder. This month, we welcomed new contributors spanning library systems, community-based organizations and nonprofit organizations, schools, and other partners from across the state. Each of these additions means more Californians can find digital inclusion programs and services in their own communities and online. We are still actively expanding and growing the Resource Finder, and these milestones are a testament to the collective effort of partners like all of you. The more organizations and locations we add, the more useful this tool becomes for residents and organizations that need it most. Next slide, please. And building on that growth we just discussed, this is where you play a direct and powerful role. As we've shared in our prior Communities of Practice, we developed a digital equity resource finder outreach Toolkit to make it as easy as possible for you to help spread the word. The toolkit is available on the Broadband for All portal, and includes a range of ready-to-use, customizable resources, including email and newsletter templates, social media content, and a video demo, all designed so you can promote the Resource Finder with your partners, communities, and networks. You are trusted messengers in your communities, and we want to make sure you have everything you need to get the word out, and encourage you to think about colleagues and partner organizations in your networks who should be listed in the Resource Finder. I'll pass it back over to Amanda.

Thanks, Luke. Thank you, Luke, and all of our presenters this morning. Our Community of Practice occurs monthly on Thursdays from 10:30 to noon. Our upcoming one is Thursday, September 27th. Both a link to the September Community of Practice is in the chat, as well as the QR code that's featured here on your screen, so wanted to make sure you all have the opportunity to register and connect with our guest speakers, as well as CDT and CPUC staff. Next slide, please. And we have a little bit of time left. The chat is open. Thank you so much for being here today, and here's our website if you would like to get ahold of us, or use the contact email, broadbandforall at state.ca.gov. The QR code, as well as the link provided in the chat, thank you, Toni, is all there for you if you need to reach us. And happy to take any questions. If anyone has anything, feel free to raise your hand and we'll call on you. Barry. Barry Boyd? You're welcome to come off of mute and camera, if you'd like.

Thank you, appreciate it. Good evening, excuse me. Yeah, I've screwed up with my... too many Zoom meetings. Good afternoon, good grief, still good morning. Anyway, getting to the point. Here's my question. Are all of the... Pilot program providers the... the internet for all. Are all of them contracted to only provide the minimum of the 100MB download and 20MB upload? Because I've come across Xfinity where they are providing 75MB download and 10 megabyte I think I said that wrong. 75MB download and 10 megabyte upload, and they are Part of the Pilot Program, it's signed up under the Pilot Program, covering the Monthly cost, which is \$14.95 for that service.

There you go.

Referring to the Lifeline program? I mean, with the CPUC?

Yes.

Yeah, are Lisa and Loi still available, or did they drop?

They had to go to another meeting.

So, I... Barry, I think we can kind of pass that comment on, or question, and see if we can get a response for you in the next meeting.

Appreciate that greatly. Thank you, folks.

We have a question in the chat from Alyssa. Are there any upcoming grants for local government to provide digital literacy services to residents? Aracely, are you able to come back on & address that question?

Yeah, sorry, the question was specifically around digital literacy grant opportunities. There is the CASF BRABAN adoption account. That one, I quickly highlighted since it has an upcoming deadline of January 1st. That one is eligible for local government, senior centers, schools, libraries, nonprofits. And the focus here is around digital literacy and broadband access, including call centers. So, that is a grant opportunity there. If you are interested. Oh, thank you so much, Ricki, for bringing up the slides. It's the one in the middle that I just referenced here. And again, you know, although the deadline is on January 1st, they do take applications on a rolling basis, you know, they'll put them in batches, but feel free to, you know, start looking through those application materials and, you know, requirements, just to make sure that you have a good understanding of that grant opportunity.

Thank you, Aracely. Are there any other remaining questions from for the team? If not, happy to give you back some time to enjoy your lunch. Barry has a question.

Thank you, I'll be brief. There was an answer back from...Oh, I can't find his name now. In regards to my question, in regards to the cost and speeds, and the answer from the individual from Xfinity Comcast is stating there's two tiers on that Lifeline internet connectivity, which is the lower tier is the 7510 versus the premium, or the better, upgrade, whatever, is the...At 100 download... sorry, 20, load speeds for \$29.95. So my question comes back to if Xfinity is under the pilot program with the Universal, California Universal, Lifeline internet program isn't the minimum. I thought the legislation was that they had to provide... any provider on that program, our pilot program, had to provide the minimum of 100 download, 20 upload, in that cost of \$20 being provided strictly for internet, and an additional \$9 if you tied in a mobile line with that. So if you guys don't have that answer, I'll take it next month, or if the Xfinity Comcast person can chime in real quick, please explain to me with the legislation that I understood it. Thank you.

Yeah, it looks like we can definitely take your question and include it in our next Community of Practice. I did drop a link in the chat to the California Lifetime Program, where it has more information, and it does provide an overview of the requirements, eligibility, you know, things of that nature, so feel free to take a look there in the meantime.

Thank you so much for your question. With that, we will conclude our meeting today. We look forward to seeing you next month on Thursday, September 24th. Thank you all and have a great day.