

Envisioning an Internet Center for Homeless Individuals:

One Group's Quest to Reduce the Digital Divide

By Rebecca Orrick, Research Assistant, Center for Urban and Regional Affairs

January 25, 2011

I speak to many homeless individuals, being one myself. One of the most pressing problems is our limited access to technology. Each individual seems to have limited ability to access technology at different levels.” -Tore Simonsen, Former homeless individual and advocate for better technology for homeless individuals

“Knowing how to read is no longer sufficient to be ‘literate’ in the 21st Century. Basic literacy must be supplemented with digital literacy.” -FCC commissioner Mignon L. Clyburn, addressing America's Broadband Summit March 9, 2010



FREE COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS FOR PEOPLE IN NEED
www.openaccessconnections.org

This report was supported by Communiversity, a program of the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA). The contents of this report are the sole responsibility of the author, and are not necessarily endorsed by the University of Minnesota or CURA.

This research report was prepared for:

Open Access Connections and

The Internet Cafe Working Group including:

Alliance of the Streets

Free Geek Twin Cities

Main Street Project

Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing

Trans Youth Support Network

Voices for Change

For more information, contact:
Open Access Connections
1821 University Avenue, Suite N-184
St. Paul, MN 55104
651.643.0883
www.openaccessconnections.org
info@openaccessconnections.org



FREE COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS FOR PEOPLE IN NEED

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	4
Introduction	5
Vision for Internet Center.....	6
Methodology.....	8
Limitations.....	9
Community Technology Center Inventory	10
Voices of the HomelessCommunity.....	11
Unique Characteristics of Homeless Population	12
How the Vision is Unique	14
Has This Been Done Before?	16
Best Practices for Running Internet Centers.....	18
Alternatives.....	20
Conclusion.....	21
Works Cited.....	24

Executive Summary

The goal of this project was to research the feasibility and logistics of creating an internet center for homeless individuals. The group who would like to see this project come to fruition is known informally as the Internet Café Working Group, and consists of individuals from the following organizations: Open Access Connections, Voices for Change, Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing, Main Street Project, Trans Youth Support Network, and Alliance of the Streets.

For this research project I was given several questions to research. First of all, I was asked to identify where individuals could currently access the internet for free in the Twin Cities. After many hours of research I was able to identify 151 places in the Twin Cities where this was possible. This included libraries, non-profits, workforce centers, park and recreation centers, shelters, and transitional housing sites. In my appendix I include a list of these places along with the information I found out about each one. Significantly more of these centers are located in Minneapolis than in St. Paul.

The second research topic I was given was to identify what the homeless population currently thinks about their access to the internet. To identify this I surveyed homeless individuals in several area shelters, led focus groups, and left a voice mail message in the inboxes of Open Access Connections voice mail users asking for their opinion. I found that large amounts of homeless individuals report having little to no computer skills, and that many would benefit from increased access. I also found out that many individuals do not know about other places to access the internet for free outside of libraries. A portion of the homeless community is satisfied with their current access, but a portion of the community feels frustrated with it, particularly in St. Paul. A common frustration was that many I spoke with knew no one who could show them how to use computers.

I was also asked to consider specific aspects about the homeless community to keep in mind in the design of an internet center. It is important that the center be open during times when there is reduced access in shelters, and in other Community Technology Centers. Times of reduced access for homeless individuals include weekends and early mornings. In addition, it is important that the center be located in an area convenient to shelters, and that safety and security measures be paid careful attention to. Finally it is important to have clearly defined rules and expectations of who is in charge.

In addition I was asked to identify whether there were any current projects that had similar characteristics to the vision that the Internet Café Working Group developed for the center. With a few exceptions, I found that many of the characteristics that were envisioned for the center were quite unique.

Last, I was asked to identify best practices for developing and managing free internet centers. To do this, in addition to internet based research, I interviewed

Community Technology Center professionals and made site visits to Community Technology Centers. In my report I discuss ten “best practices” for managing public computer centers.

Introduction

Digital literacy, or the ability to manipulate computer concepts and skills to access and share information, is increasingly important in the modern age. According to individuals involved in the Twin Cities based Technology Literacy Collaborative there are four reasons why it is important to increase the number of people who are digitally literate.

First of all, digital literacy is necessary to develop a 21st century workforce. Knowing how to access the internet, use search engines, and send email, is increasingly important in both searching for a job and performing basic job functions once a job offer is made. Secondly, the manipulation of computer based technology is essential towards connecting with online information. Whether it is searching for health information online, or finding the address of the nearest bus station, it is clear that access to the internet is pertinent in getting around in the modern age. Third, access to the internet appears to be partially responsible for the achievement gap in education that separates the kids who do well in school, and the kids who don't. In one national study of children aged 6 to 17, a full 90% of children reported that access to a high speed broadband connection in their homes was important in completing their assignments and 70% reported it helped get them better grades.ⁱ Lastly, being digitally literate is important in creating civically engaged citizens and in expanding social networks. Whether it is networking on LinkedIn, or sending an email to a congressional representative, digital literacy helps make our world more connected.ⁱⁱ

While it is important for anyone to have digital literacy skills, it is especially important for individuals who are homeless. Finding housing and other resources to get off the streets is infinitely easier if you know how to perform basic computer functions like sending an email. While most people take for granted that they know how to perform basic tasks on the internet, the reality remains that a significant portion of the homeless population is still digitally illiterate. Increasing the number of people who are self sufficient digitally decreases the number of people dependent on case workers and other overburdened social service providers.

To address this problem, a collaborative of individuals has recently come together to envision a solution. One option that they have come up with is the idea of developing an Internet center specifically for people who are homeless. This collaborative informally calls themselves the Internet Café Working Group. They consist of individuals from the following organizations: Open Access Connections, Voices for Change, Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing, Main Street Project, Trans Youth Support Network, and Alliance of the Streets.

In order to assess the feasibility of an internet café for homeless individuals and figure out logistics, I came on as a research assistant. I am a graduate student at the University of Minnesota who has experience working within a public computer lab for low income individuals and with other digital inclusion initiatives. My research was supported by the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. The organization providing weekly guidance for my research was Open Access Connections, a nonprofit organization situated in St. Paul, Minnesota, dedicated to providing free access to technology for low income and homeless individuals.¹ Currently Open Access Connections provides free voice mail services so that people who can not afford reliable phone service can still be reached via voice mail. In addition they have recently been funded to launch a "Netbook lending library" for homeless and recently homeless individuals.

I was given the below topics to research.

- 1) Where can people who are homeless and low income currently access the internet for free?
- 2) What does the homeless community think about the access that they currently have to the internet?
- 3) What unique characteristics of the homeless community should we keep in mind when we envision an internet center?
- 4) How is our vision different than what currently exists? Are there similar projects out there?
- 5) What are best practices for developing and managing free internet centers?

Vision for Internet Center

Before I discuss my methodology for answering the above questions I wish to first detail briefly the specific aspects of the vision for the center that the Internet Café Working group envisions. They do not see this center as simply a place for homeless individuals to use computers, but as a community building space where individuals who are homeless can become more engaged with technology, and use it to better themselves and their communities.

Here are some of the specific aspects of the vision. I will return to this vision in more detail in subsequent sections of this report.

- 1) Run by and for individuals who are homeless and low income. Traditionally the relationship between low income and homeless individuals and non-profit service providers is a client and staff relationship. The Internet Café Working Group turns this theory on its head by insisting that from the beginning, the relationship that

¹ Open Access Connections was formally known as Twin Cities Community Voice Mail.

the internet center will have with these individuals will be a more collaborative and participatory relationship. They intend on having individuals who are homeless be involved in every step- from brainstorming what the center will look like, to staffing the center once it is created.

- 2) Job Creation for Homeless- As part of this new relationship, they will employ homeless and formerly homeless individuals to staff the computer lab. This will help to offer a way out of poverty for people. Open Access Connections has already started to identify people it works with who are homeless who would be good candidates for these positions (*See Appendix A*).
- 3) Hours and Location- Many public internet centers in the Twin Cities offer limited hours and a location that is not convenient to people who are homeless. When designing the hours, Open Access Connections should pay particular attention to the gaps in service of other internet centers and shelters. The homeless population often does not have access to transportation, so it is very important that a center be located within walking distance to shelters.
- 4) Unrestricted Content -Many places that offer free internet access have strict restrictions on what people can do on the computers. Many focus exclusively on searching for employment, so there is a service gap that is created if people want to connect to other resources. Furthermore, research shows that people learn computer skills best when they can play games or do other activities that are low stress and low pressure.ⁱⁱⁱ Many existing public computer centers do not allow this.
- 5) More than an Internet Center: A Second Home- The center will be more than an internet center, it will have couches and food, and offer a place for people to relax and build community in a safe place. When shelters let people out in the morning, many homeless individuals don't have anywhere to go. This will give them a safe place to go where they can build community.
- 6) Addressing Fear- Many people who are homeless and who do not know how to use computers have reported that they are fearful of going to existing centers because they do not know if there will be someone there who can help teach them step by step how to perform the tasks they want to learn how to do on the computers. Not all centers have the staff to do this.
- 7) Digital storytelling/civic engagement- The Internet Café Working Group is very interested in securing a space where homeless individuals can “tell their story” to help inform public policy. In addition they would like to see homeless individuals become more connected with social media and other topics that will help them feel more connected to society as a whole and with each other.
- 8) More than a Drop in Center - The Internet Café Working group envisions the space for the Internet Center to be used in ways that build community and help

out the homeless community. They want to create a culture at the center where people feel empowered to create a positive and collaborative environment.

Methodology

To address the question, “Where can people who are homeless and low income currently access the internet for free?” I conducted an inventory of all the places where people could access computers and technology outside their homes in the Twin Cities. These centers are commonly known as Community Technology Centers (CTCs), and will be referred to as such in the rest of this paper.² In this list I did not include universities, schools, or other areas where access was limited only to people who pay.³ To inform my list, I started out with the list of CTCs from the Technology Literacy Collaborative, and added to it computer labs in shelters, public housing, and in other non- profits that were not currently on the list.⁴ In forming my list, I made numerous phone calls to find accurate hours, and to follow up on sites that were no longer in operation. I also made site visits to a variety of the labs.

To answer the question “What does the homeless community think about the access that they currently have to the internet?” I conducted numerous interviews of homeless individuals and human service professionals, led focus groups, administered surveys to homeless individuals on their access to technology, and collected responses from a broadcast messaging system that Open Access Connections uses to solicit feedback from their participants who receive free voicemail services (*See Appendix B*).⁵ The places in which I asked people who were homeless to fill out surveys were Dorothy Day, Listening House, Project Homeless Connect at the Minneapolis Convention Center, and Salvation Army Harbor Lights. All those who completed a survey were given the “Handbook of the Streets” resource manual as a thank you. In total, I surveyed 89 individuals who were homeless, 47 from St. Paul, and 42 from Minneapolis. The survey questions consisted of three open ended questions asking individuals about their internet access and their recommendations for developing an internet center (*See Appendix C*).

To answer the question, “What unique characteristics of the homeless community should we keep in mind when envisioning an internet center?” I talked to a variety of

² Community Technology Centers are also known as neighborhood network centers by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Community Computer Centers by Minneapolis Parks and Recreation, and Public Computer Centers by the recipients of the most recent grants by the Broadband Technologies Opportunity Program (BTOP).

³ Many lists of Community Technology Centers do include these centers, it all depends on how you define community technology.

⁴ Computer Labs not currently on the TLC’s list will be added in upcoming months.

⁵ This messaging system works by having Open Access Connections send out a “broadcast message” that automatically messages everyone who has a voice mail number. When these individuals check their voice mail they will receive the message, and then they have the option of responding. In the past Open Access Connections has used this broadcast messaging system to solicit information from homeless individuals to educate legislators on issues relevant to them and inform public policy.

human service providers and homeless individuals as well as the Open Access Connection staff.

To answer the question about best practices to run a center and the uniqueness of the vision, I performed considerable internet research, visited many different Community Technology Centers, and talked to a variety of professionals who run Community Technology Centers. I also incorporated feedback from homeless individuals I talked to.

Limitations

There were several limitations to my study. First of all, I was operating under a time constraint. I only had about 15 weeks on a part time basis to perform the research for this study. In addition my topic was very broad. As a result, I was not able to cover the intricacies of each subtopic as thoroughly as I would have liked.

Furthermore, I could not find any other research specifically on the access that homeless individuals had to technology and only limited information on best practices for designing Community Technology Centers.

As a result, much of my research was original research, and based largely on primary interviews and surveys. Given my limited time constraint, I could not interview and survey as many people as I would have liked to.

Another limitation I faced dealt with the specific demographic I was attempting to connect with. Because the homeless population is very transient, there was not a way to develop a random sample to survey. Because of this I had to rely on a convenience survey of homeless individuals staying at shelters, and homeless individuals who went to the Minneapolis Homeless Connect. For my survey, I only had time to survey 89 individuals.

In addition there was a response bias inherent in my survey. Individuals who took the time to answer my survey or chose to respond to the broadcast message that Open Access Connections sent out were self selecting themselves as inherently being more likely to be knowledgeable about and interested in technology as a whole than the greater Twin Cities homeless population. In addition the homeless individuals I questioned for the focus groups were part of pre-selected groups of individuals working towards improving the conditions of homeless individuals, so are not a representative survey of all homeless individuals.

Community Technology Center Inventory

In total there are 151 known places where people can access the internet and other technology for free in Minneapolis and St. Paul (*See Appendix D*). In Minneapolis and St. Paul people can access computers at libraries, WorkForce Centers, non-profits, Park and Recreation sites, shelters, and at various transitional housing locations. These locations offer a variety of different services and have a variety of different restrictions on usage. For instance, some Community Technology Centers are only available to certain clientele, and some only offer classes, while others are open to whoever wants to use internet technology. In addition, there is a range of assistance available- some centers cater to individuals new to computers while others, such as public libraries, allow individuals to browse the internet on their own, free of restrictions. Many technology centers only offer internet access to those seeking employment, and most are not open outside of the hours of 9 to 5, Monday through Friday.⁶

Of particular interest to the Internet Café Working group are the internet centers available specifically to those who stay at shelters or in transitional housing. These are private labs are open only to residents or individuals involved in programming at the shelter or transitional housing location. There are 33 such centers known that offer internet and computer access for their guests. Many of these labs are sponsored by private charities such as Catholic Charities, or public housing agencies such as the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (*See Appendix E*).

There are several very interesting components of the Twin Cities technology literacy scene. First of all, the Twin Cities is home to the Community Technology Empowerment Project AmeriCorps group. As part of their AmeriCorps service, these AmeriCorps members are placed in Community Technology Centers throughout the Twin Cities area. They provide direct service in computer labs, and offer capacity building services, providing as an invaluable resource to the non-profits and community centers that they serve within. This force of AmeriCorps members helps the digital literacy scene in the Twin Cities prosper.

Another interesting component of the Twin Cities technology literacy scene is that there is much better access to Community Technology Centers in Minneapolis than in St. Paul.⁷ As of July 2009, approximately 37% more people lived in Minneapolis than St. Paul. However, Minneapolis has nearly twice the number of Community Technology Centers as St. Paul (97 verses 54).^{iv,v} Furthermore, public libraries, which represent a very large portion of Community Technology Centers, appear to offer better access to the internet in Minneapolis than St. Paul. This is because while libraries in St. Paul do not allow users to use their computers for more than one hour each day unless they are using a technology center within the library (such as a homework center), in Minneapolis there is no daily limit. Instead individuals are able to use the computer for thirty minutes to an

⁶ Of notable exception are the public libraries, many of whom have extended hours during the week and on weekends.

⁷ Within Minneapolis, a large number of Community Technology Centers are located in the South Minneapolis area.

hour at a time, and can have their access automatically extended if no one is waiting. If time runs out they are allowed to wait for a computer to become available again. Waiting for a computer after one's time runs out, or having access extended is not an option in the St. Paul Public Library system.^{vi,vii}

One area that the Twin Cities could improve upon is in getting the word out about many of the Community Technology Centers located outside of libraries. In the Twin Cities, traditional channels of getting the word out about social services do not seem to be operating as efficiently as they could when it comes to these centers. When providing referrals, Twin Cities based social service agencies often either refer people to the Handbook of the Streets or United Way 211. The Handbook of the Streets, while an excellent manual for navigating social service resources for homeless and low income individuals, does not currently include a section for Community Technology Centers.⁸ In addition, while United Way 211 acts as a lifeline for many individuals who need information on resources in the Twin Cities, it does not currently keep track of Community Technology Centers as a resource.⁹

To address this issue, the Technology Literacy Collaborative(TLC) has made a list of local Community Technology Centers on their website. This is an excellent first step towards getting the word out about Community Technology Centers. However, other avenues of getting the word out should be perused as well.¹⁰

Voices of the Homeless Community

So where does the Twin Cities homeless population connect with technology and what do they think about their access? Of the individuals I surveyed, there were a wide range of different perspectives. By far, the most commonly reported place for people to access the internet was the library, with 48 out of 89 respondents reporting that they access the internet there. Individuals also reported that they access the internet at area shelters, non-profits, universities, at the houses of friends and families and on their smart phones and laptops. However, many individuals specifically mentioned that they did not know of other places to access the internet besides public libraries.

⁸ While there is not currently Community Technology Center information available in the Handbook, they do include an excellent section on job assistance sites which normally operate within community technology centers.

⁹ As an experiment, I called United Way 211 with a St. Paul zip code and was told that the only places I could access computers were at the Family Place Day Shelter or Listening House Drop In Center if I were homeless or the public library if I wasn't. When I called United Way with a Minneapolis number, I was told my only options were the public library or the workforce centers.

¹⁰ In the course of my research I became aware of CTCs that were not currently listed on the Technology Literacy Collaborative's website. In the coming months I will work to update this website to include these centers. The website can be accessed at: <http://tlc-mn.org/ctc>

Individuals in Minneapolis gave mostly positive responses about their access to internet technology, often citing the Minneapolis Central Library for having computer access normally instantly available with no wait. In contrast, the homeless community in St. Paul gave less positive responses, often mentioning that accessing computers at the downtown St. Paul library was very difficult, and often resulted in long waiting times. In several cases, people mentioned feeling so frustrated with how difficult it was to access the internet due to their limited skills and the long waiting times that they effectively gave up trying. One St. Paul respondent mentioned, “I waste time when I go to the library. [I] use the internet for one hour and wait for 3 hours.” People also expressed frustration over the 60 minute daily time limit saying that it wasn’t enough time to do the things they needed to do on the computers. Another St. Paul respondent remarked, “If you’re not familiar with the internet, you could spend a whole hour just trying to get on.”^{viii}

When asked what they wanted to do on the computers, individuals gave a wide range of responses. Many wanted to search for housing or find employment, but others wanted to learn advanced computer skills, build a website, or just see what the internet had to offer.

Of the 89 individuals I surveyed, 20 people, or 22% of my sample, reported that they did not know how to use computers at all. Among the homeless community in both cities, for individuals that did not access the internet there were a wide range of reasons they gave for why they did not. Responses ranged from those who were very eager to learn how to use internet technology, but as of yet no one had showed them, to those who had misconceptions about what the internet was about, such as the person who mentioned, “The internet is bad news.- too many drug dealers and sex offenders.” In addition, some felt that that accessing the internet would not have any positive benefit in their lives, such as the person who mentioned, “When you’re on the street, [you] just go by what people tell [you], and it’s normally pretty good.” In addition, there were several individuals who mentioned that they did not access the internet because they did not know how to read, suggesting a larger underlying issue, needing access to remedial education.^{ix}

Unique Characteristics of Homeless Population

When we think of the needs of the homeless population there are several things that come to mind. First of all, because they often do not have reliable access to transportation, it is important that services for homeless individuals be located close to area shelters.¹¹ In addition, services should be open during gaps in service of other places for homeless individuals to go. Currently, the Twin Cities homeless population appears to

¹¹ While there are some homeless individuals who do not stay in shelters scattered around the city, many stay in shelters most commonly located in the downtown Minneapolis, downtown St. Paul, or South Minneapolis areas. For this reasons, it makes sense to situate an internet center around these areas, most likely in St. Paul due to the reduced access to Community Technology Centers.

be underserved in terms of social services early in the morning, on weekends, and on certain days of the week (*See Appendix F*).¹²

Another factor that needs to be considered carefully in designing an internet center for people who are homeless is that of safety. Given that many individuals who are homeless experience mental or chemical health struggles, or are down on their luck economically, measures need to be taken so that individuals feel safe and that equipment does not get stolen. This is particularly important if the internet center is a stand-alone center that does not offer other services, and if is open at times when there may not be many other people around. One idea that the Internet Café Working group had to address issues of security would be to have “bouncers,” or people employed who would be able to take control if any situation were to arise. The working group should also consider installing security cameras or alarming the facility to protect the building from theft. To protect the liability of the Internet Café Working group, an insurance policy should be taken out for the facility.

Safety has been an issue in the past with other groups contemplating creating internet centers. In 2006, a group putting together suggestions for the Minneapolis’ Community Benefits Agreement associated with the municipal wireless project, considered suggesting that the benefits agreement include kiosks offering free 24/7 wireless access in low income neighborhoods. However, this group ended up not including this recommendation in their proposal for the Minneapolis Community Benefits agreement due to their concerns over safety issues in unmonitored locations. People were afraid that the kiosks could be used for illegal activity.”^x

In order to address concerns of safety, the City of Seattle’s Community Technology Program recommends that Community Technology Centers consider carefully the tradeoffs that present themselves in terms of the visibility and location of internet centers. They state, “a tradeoff must be struck between making them [CTC’s] visible and attractive to casual drop-in traffic on the one hand, and making sure they do not become inviting targets for theft, vandalism, and other security hazards.”^{xi}

To address safety concerns, several Community Technology Centers have stressed the importance of having adequate numbers of paid staffing to mitigate risks. For instance, the neighborhood of Harlem in New York City has a famous Community Technology Center known as the “Playing to Win Harlem Center.” Because it is located in the heart of a high crime neighborhood, they have a policy that at all times there must be two paid staff present. In regards to this policy they say “we cannot ask volunteers to take sole responsibility for the security of the space or the occupants at any time.”^{xii} CTCNet, a group that acts as a resource to Community Technology Centers across the country, also gave similar recommendations, advising that at least two staff members (paid or volunteer) be on the premises at all times the center is open.^{xiii}

¹² According to several homeless individuals and advocates, early mornings, Wednesdays, Fridays, and weekends are times of reduced service for the homeless population in downtown St. Paul.

While it is important in all Community Technology Centers that there be help available if people need it, it is particularly important in centers for individuals who are homeless. Learning a new skill like computer competency can be especially difficult if one has not slept properly the night before as is the case for many homeless individuals, or if one is battling any number of other issues that many people who are homeless face. In a conversation I had with long time homelessness advocate, Bret Byfield, the importance of having staff who are adequately trained in how to interact with people positively was stressed, so that the center is a positive place for individuals to go to. He suggested that all staff be trained in a counseling technique known as Motivational Interviewing.^{xiv}

Another issue of particular importance to the homeless population is that everyone who visits the center understands “who is in charge” and what the rules are. This issue was brought up in both focus groups with homeless individuals and in my conversation with Doug Fountain, former X-Committee member, as one reason why the X-Committee ended up not being able to survive.^{xv} At first, when there was one leader, the X-Committee functioned well, but once that leader had to step down, there were too many directions the group was trying to go in, and no one in charge to direct the group, so the group was not able to survive.¹³ In the Voices for Change focus group, I was told that a major reason why internet access was removed from Listening House was that there would be fighting over who would use the computers, stemming from conflicts over unclearly defined rules about the length of time that individuals could use computers for.^{xvi}

How the Vision is Unique

As discussed above, in designing the center, the Internet Café Working Group has made it very clear that they intend for it to be run by the individuals it intends to serve. This is a very unique way of providing a service because traditionally the social service model is one of clients and staff. However, in this vision, the participants will be part of the staff, and be active in both designing and running the center. Currently, Open Access Connections employs homeless and low income individuals to spread the word about their free voice mail program, and to give feedback on how their organization is run through their advisory group. They will use a similar method to design and run the Internet center. As part of this, jobs will be created that will help individuals who are homeless get out of poverty. The Internet Café Working Group has already started to identify people it works with who are homeless or recently homeless who would be good candidates for these positions (*See Appendix A*).

¹³ Voices for Change is a group of homeless individuals that meets at Listening House in St. Paul about issues pertaining to ending and preventing homelessness. The X-Committee was an initiative started by homeless individuals in St. Paul in 2004 that lasted one year. In this year they were able to successfully secure their own office space, have a computer lab, organize their peers to mentor other peers in fighting drug addictions, and secure lockers for homeless individuals to put their belongings during the day.

The Internet Café Working Group model is also unique because it envisions (relatively speaking) unrestricted content on what people can do on the computers. Instead of saying that people can only conduct job searches or only complete educational activities, Open Access Connections wants to provide as close to open access as possible. The only centers that I am aware of that offer such open access are libraries, which may sometimes not be useful to the segment of the homeless population that is not comfortable using computers or does not have a library card.^{14,15} Instead of providing open access, a large number Community Technology Centers focus almost exclusively on workforce readiness.¹⁶

For this reason, there is a service gap if individuals want to learn how to use the internet for other purposes, such as accessing affordable housing, or just gaining comfort with using computers. Research shows that people learn computer skills best when they can play games or do other activities that are low stress and low pressure, so it makes sense to provide open access time. This is because low pressure interactions with technology, whether it is getting acquainted with social networking, or playing a game online, offer the “path to becoming an empowered user who views the internet as a resource or expansion of his or her world.”^{xvii} Carl Redwood, former associate director of the Hill House Community Access Network also emphasized the importance of providing unstructured access. “I think there is a danger in the technology center movement, particularly as it relates to low-income communities, to assume we’re doing something for people...I think what we have to do is just make resources available to the community, and the community will figure out what, when, and how to use them. And they may not use them the way the mayor’s office or someone else thinks they should use them... But I think it just needs to be open like that.”^{xviii}

There is just one word of caution I have for the Internet Café Working Group on this subject. Just as there are tradeoffs that must be made in the hours and location of the proposed internet center, there also are also tradeoffs in how much time people are allowed to use the internet, and how unstructured the time is. This is because while there are definite merits to open access, a large amount of unstructured time can result in a few people monopolizing the computers doing activities like playing games, while others are waiting to use computers for other more immediately constructive activities. One of the respondents to the broadcast question I sent out brought this up in his response. He said, “The problem with the library is that you get an hour and people don’t want to do work on the internet, they want to watch a movie or listen to music or play games. This is limiting when you want to look for housing or employment, so you have to wait an hour and are lumped into the same pool (as those playing games).”^{xix}

¹⁴ Libraries do not always have the staff capacity to sit with someone one-on-one for an extended time period to show them how to perform a particular task on the computer

¹⁵ One thing that was mentioned several times in focus groups was that individuals would often lose their library internet privileges because they would check out books, store them in lockers, and then the lockers would be cleaned out a certain time, and they would lose the books. They would thus rack up fines that they could not afford to pay and would therefore lose their library cards.

¹⁶ This is because much of the funding available to Community Technology Centers comes from agencies and foundations dedicated to helping people secure employment.

The Internet Café Working group's vision is also different from other centers because it hopes to use its space as a place for civic engagement and potentially civically motivated media projects. Central to the core of their mission is a community organizing model that aims to incorporate the feedback of low income individuals into the policy sphere. One of the methods that Open Access Connections currently employs to do this is by collecting people's opinion about different current policy initiatives on their broadcast system, and sending the recorded messages to policy makers. They would love to do this on a larger scale, and dream of some day incorporating some kind of video into this advocacy. If they want to move forward on this, good partners would be St. Stephen's Human Services, who has done some media advocacy with homeless populations in the past, or St. Paul Neighborhood Network, who is always looking for new organizations to partner with.

In getting people connected to the internet, the Internet Café Working Group wants people to feel comfortable. They recognize that many homeless people are intimidated by the idea of the internet and don't want anything to do with it.^{xx} To address this hard-to-reach population, the Internet Café Working Group wants to make their center as comfortable as possible, with a meeting place and couches for people to socialize as they are taking breaks from the internet. In envisioning the vibe that Internet Café Working Group wants people to feel when they walk into this center, they think of the Wellness Center at First Lutheran Church on the east side of St. Paul. The Wellness center opens its doors every Thursday evening for a few hours as a community building space for homeless and low income individuals. There are meditation classes, opportunities to get acupuncture performed for free, and an opportunity to build job skills by volunteering in the kitchen preparing a community meal. It is run with the philosophy that it is a community building space for everyone to feel welcome. People come to the Wellness Center to relax and interact with friends and neighbors; there is no pressure to do any particular activity.^{xxi}

Has this been done before?

Many shelters provide internet access to homeless individuals. However, there is a big difference between what is provided at many shelters and transitional housing facilities and what the Internet Café Working group is proposing will occur at their internet café.

What are the differences? First of all, many local shelters provide internet access mainly only to those seeking employment.^{xxii,xxiii} This alienates those who want to use the internet for other means, such as looking up information related to health care. As was discussed in the section above, the Internet Café Working Group wants to provide truly "open access" to the internet and technology to homeless and low income individuals. They see an open environment to interacting with technology as key to community building and creating civically engaged civilians. In addition they recognize

that there are many activities of merit to do on computers in addition to seeking employment.

The desire to use the center for media or civic engagement also sets the proposal that the Internet Café Working Group has highlighted apart from many other existing internet centers in shelters and transitional housing facilities.

Many facets of the vision for this internet center also mirror an initiative started in 2004 by the homeless community known as the X-Committee. As part of this initiative a space was rented out in a storefront in downtown St. Paul as a place for the homeless community to have a place of their own. Everything was run by and for the homeless community.

There were several projects that the X-Committee championed. First of all, there were computers available for people to get acquainted with internet technology. Even though employment searching was not a formal program that was offered, 25 people found jobs by searching for employment at this center. Secondly, the X-Committee noticed that the homeless community needed a place to put their belongings during the day, so that they did not have to take them with them everywhere they went, and make a bad impression on potential employers. For this reason, they worked hard to secure lockers where people could store their belongings, and ultimately were successful. Finally, the X-Committee developed a peer mentor program to counsel those who were addicted to drugs to fight their addictions.^{xxiv}

Unfortunately, however, the X-Committee model ended up being unsustainable, and only lasted a year. According to one of the founders, Doug Fountain, there were two main reasons why it fell apart. First of all, the leaders of the project were overworked and exhausted. They were working 10-12 hour days without being paid. When one of the main leaders had to step down due to personal issues, the project waned. Secondly, there were too many leaders and not enough followers. Too many people were championing different initiatives, leaving too few people to do the work to get them established.^{xxv,17}

What can we learn from the X-Committee? First of all, we can learn that it is important to let the users of Community Technology Centers have a say in the programming that occurs within the center. We can also learn that it is important to have a sustainable business model in order to sustain the center from year to year, and to not overwork the staff. Finally we can learn that it is important that the center be located in an area convenient to individuals who are homeless, and to not pursue too many initiatives at once.

¹⁷ Other big issues that occurred with the X-Committee were that homeless individuals would sleep in the building where the X-Committee was housed overnight, causing problems with the building's property owners. In addition many people just used it as a place to get out of the cold instead of a community building space.

Best Practices for Running Internet Centers

While some of the below policies may seem a little mundane or obvious, they are important things to think about in running internet centers.

1. From the beginning, get the word out about the internet center, and spend a lot of time advertising. If you do not let a lot of people know about your center, people will not come. Many computer labs have made this mistake when they were just getting started, they didn't do much advertising, so in the beginning many of their labs were under utilized.^{xxvi}
2. For funding purposes, many centers find that it is helpful (or required by funders!) to track the demographics of individuals who visit the center.^{xxvii,xxviii,xxix} Consider from the beginning having a sign in sheet that new users fill out tracking their demographics. One might also consider tracking information such as the number of jobs received, or the number of civic media projects created.
3. It is important to decide conclusively whether or not the center will allow kids. If kids are allowed, they will have to be monitored more closely so that they do not damage the equipment. One innovative way that the People Serving People Shelter addresses the issue of childcare is to have an unsupervised play area situated next to the computer lab in a separate room. While parents are using the computers in the lab, they can monitor their children in the next room on a webcam.^{xxx}
4. Many centers also find that it is helpful to post the rules of the center so that everyone who visits the center is clear on what is expected of them. Typically these rules include variations of "No food or drink" so that computer systems do not get damaged, "Silence please" so that people can concentrate on their work, and "Be respectful of others" to set the tone for a harmonious environment.^{xxxi,xxxii}
5. If at all possible, the center should aim to have consistent hours. Community users get very frustrated when hours change a lot, so it is often better to have shorter, consistent hours, than longer, wildly inconsistent hours.^{xxxiii} Many centers stretch the hours that they are open with volunteer help, but there is a tradeoff, volunteers can not be expected to have the same level of responsibility and reliability as paid staff members.¹⁸ Furthermore, in planning for volunteers it is important to remember that volunteers need to be recruited, trained, and managed, which can often be a job in and of itself.^{xxxiv}

¹⁸ When finding volunteers, volunteermatch.org is a good place to start. It is also a good idea to connect with local college community service offices to let them know you have volunteer opportunities available.

6. Do not underestimate the amount of planning it will take to start up a stand-alone computer center. Starting one up from scratch can be very expensive, difficult, and time consuming.^{xxxv,xxxvi} If it all possible, it is best to partner with an existing initiative. Most computer labs do not exist as stand-alone centers, but within nonprofits and other organizations for this very reason. When searching for partners, the requirements of a good location and a shared mission should be prioritized.
7. Be leery of donated equipment- It is worth it to invest in new equipment if it means your internet center will offer individuals more reliable access, and be less prone to breaking down.^{xxxvii}
8. Make sure to schedule regular maintenance, and have someone on staff who can inexpensively maintain and troubleshoot computer and printer problems. If the equipment that is bought is new, there will be less maintenance expenses necessary, but there may still be some. In order to keep computers running fast, the library and several other non-profits reset the memory of their computers every time they log off.^{xxxviii}
9. Develop a policy regarding whether or not people are allowed to save material on the computers. Centers approach saving in different ways. Project for Pride in Living does not allow people to save files on the computers, but offers them a flash drive that they can purchase, or teaches them how to save to their email.^{xxxix} Catholic Charities' Mary Hall takes this a step further by giving participants a flash drive that fits around their wrist so that it is a lot harder to lose.^{xl} Visitors to the Workforce Center are often encouraged to save to their email.^{xli} It can be very confusing for beginning users to learn how to do this, but it is a good skill to know how to do. Another option is to allow people to save on the computer's hard drive. Waite House Neighborhood Center approaches the issue of saving by allowing each person to have a separate folder on the computer that they can save their documents within.^{xlii} There is a way to make a place where people save sensitive information password protected, so that the risk of people looking at sensitive information saved on the computer is reduced significantly.^{xliii}
10. Also develop a policy on printing. If unlimited printing is allowed, people can quickly eat up the budget of the Community Technology Center, by printing huge amounts of paper. St. Stephen's shelter solves this problem by requiring that before anything is printed it gets sent to a control computer that the lab monitor staffs.^{xliv} If the lab monitor okays it, then it can get printed. This negates the likelihood of someone deciding to print out an entire book online, or 50 copies of their favorite recipe.

Alternatives

Before running fully with the project of developing an internet center, it is worth it to consider the merits and disadvantages of other potential projects that would build upon the digital literacy of homeless individuals as well. These projects could be implemented in addition to, or instead of, a formal internet center.

One alternative project would be to create a mobile laptop computer lab that could circulate to nearby shelters. The Internet Café Working Group could embed laptops with 4G data plan cards and bring them to drop in hours at area shelters. This would have the advantage of potentially reaching those who were harder to reach- who might not make the trek to an internet center, but might be curious enough about internet technology that they would try it if it were brought to them. In addition a mobile computer lab would have the advantage of being significantly less expensive than an internet center and less difficult to coordinate and put together. It could be used to provide computer access to shelters that do not currently offer access, to extend the hours of the shelters that do, or to offer a different kind of computer access than many shelters currently allow.¹⁹ However, a mobile computer lab would have the disadvantage that it would not be based out of a physical space so programming hours would be dependent on when shelters were open. This would also not address the concern of many homeless individuals that there is nowhere to go in the mornings when shelters let out, or on weekends.^{20,21}

Another project that Open Access Connections could pursue would be spreading the word about existing Community Technology Centers, given that so many people who are homeless do not seem to be aware of them. Several service providers and experts in the field of community technology have mentioned that this would be very valuable, because some centers are currently underutilized^{xlv,xlvi}. A disadvantage of this would be that the Internet Café Working Group would not have a space to call their own to lead programming in.

¹⁹ Shelters that do not currently have computer labs include Simpson Housing and Sharing and Caring Hands. Listening House has computers but not internet access, so could also benefit from a mobile computer lab.

²⁰ If the Internet Café Working group does decide to pursue a mobile computer lab, they should get in touch with St. Paul Public Libraries and Wilder Foundation, both of whom who have mobile computer labs.

²¹ Open Access Connections recently received a grant for a similar project- a Netbook lending library, where homeless individuals will be able to rent out laptops. This could easily lead to developing a mobile computer lab from that initiative.

A final option would be to lead workshops advertised to the broader homeless community about how to access computers at the library or on how to use computers. Open Access Connections already plans to do a variation of this for the netbook lending library that they are establishing, so this would just be taking it a step further. A disadvantage to this would be that it would not reach as many people as an internet center or mobile computer lab would.

Conclusion

Regardless of the direction that this project goes in, it will be fascinating to see how it develops.

If the Internet Café Working group decides to continue moving toward the development of an internet café, it will be important to start taking tangible steps towards thinking about practical details including where the funding will come from, who the partners will be, and where it will be located.

Based on my research, I would highly recommend not trying to develop a stand-alone center, because it seems like an overwhelming amount of work, expense, and potential liability.²² There is a lot of work needed in developing an internet center and there will be even more so if it is a stand-alone center. As digital inclusion advocate Catherine Settani, who has experience creating stand-alone internet centers put it, "If I had to do it again I wouldn't have done a storefront, I would have found an existing space. There's all this stuff to think about - Humidity to make sure the computers don't burn out, security, insurance, liability, staffing... it's overwhelming."^{xlvi} Instead, the Internet Café Working group should start reaching out seriously to potential program partners that they already have ties to, and who are situated in a location that they believe is best for the center.

Again, based on my research, downtown St. Paul seems like the best place for an internet center, since it seems to be of the more underserved regions of the Twin Cities in terms of internet access and is accessible to area shelters.

I would also recommend skimming through the CTC Center Start up manual to get an idea of all the different tasks that need to be considered prior to starting up a center. The manual is accessible at this link:

www.ctcnet.org/what/resources/startup_manual.htm

²² Stand-alone centers exist as independent entities, specializing in offering a space for community members to use technology, without other support services. More commonly found are computer centers existing within existing agencies.

Another good resource is the Department of Housing and Urban Development's planning guide for its transitional housing computer labs. That resource guide is accessible here:

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/nnw/resourcesforcenters/startworkbook.pdf>

There are lots of other conversations to be had about the logistics of the internet center, but perhaps those conversations cannot be fully discussed until practical details of the center are more developed. As mentioned previously, there are a lot of tradeoffs that will occur based on how the rules are developed. Here are just some of the concepts that need to be discussed thoroughly:

- Who can use the computers?
- Will there be any restrictions on computer usage? For instance, if someone randomly shows up at the door, will they be able to use the computers, or will it only be membership based?
- How long can individuals use the computers for, and how does one balance wanting to provide open access to computers for an unlimited amount of time, and also not wanting people to have to wait for computer usage?
- How does one balance wanting to have a center that has a convenient location and hours for people who are homeless to get to, but also not wanting the center to turn into a drop in center?
- How does one balance the desire to provide individuals who use the center with some level of privacy, while at the same time protecting the center's liability and safety?

If the internet center is developed, there are several interesting programming angles that could be pursued. One interesting angle it could take would be partnering with various community media organizations such as St. Paul Neighborhood Network to create community media made by homeless individuals.

Another angle that the café could take would be as a community space for free community education of all types. Several homeless individuals I spoke with mentioned that they could use a variety of different types of education. To accomplish this the Internet Café Working group could partner with the Experimental College of the Twin Cities (EXCO), St. Stephen's Human Services, and other organizations interested in providing free community education, and use the center as a meeting space.

The internet center could also be used as a place where individuals who are homeless could be introduced to a variety of different types of social networking and information tools ranging from Facebook to blogging. In addition, there are several exciting initiatives occurring with civic engagement in the Twin Cities and beyond that the homeless community could be introduced to. First of all, many individuals in the Twin Cities communicate online about issues they care about through a list serve known as E-Democracy. There might be potential to create an issue based forum specific to

homelessness. If not, there are other methods that can be used to create free online communication tools, such as Google groups. In addition, there is a resource forum and message board being developed to share resources within the homeless community by an individual who is homeless himself.^{xlviii} Both of these options have a lot of potential to create community in a digital sphere for individuals who are homeless.

There is a lot of exciting potential for this project, and I am excited to see it develop!

-
- ⁱ Carlson, Natalie. 2007. "National Survey Finds Kids Give High Marks to High Speed." *Hispanic PR Wire*. Retrieved from: <http://www.hispanicprwire.com/generarnews.php?1=in&id=2774&cha=0>
- ⁱⁱ Koschinska, Sarah, VanCura, MaryAnn, Thao, Terri, Richard, John, and Libby Caulum. 2010. "Towards Digital Inclusion: The Role of Community Technology Centers." Power point presentation prepared for the 2010 MN Council of Nonprofits Technology & Communications Conference.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Dharma Dailey et al. Broadband adoption in low income communities. Social Science Research Council Report. March 2010
- ^{iv} Dunbar, Elizabeth. Minneapolis, St. Paul Populations up slightly. 2010. *Minnesota Public Radio*. Retrieved from: <http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2010/06/22/census-side/>
- ^v "Known Community Technology Centers." Compiled by Rebecca Orrick, Fall-Winter 2010.
- ^{vi} "Using the Internet at the Library." *St. Paul Public Library*. Retrieved from: <http://www.sppl.org/userguide/internet-signup.html>
- ^{vii} Conversations with reference librarians in Minneapolis and St. Paul. June, 15th 2011.
- ^{viii} Ibid
- ^{ix} Ibid
- ^x Email Conversation with John Richard, Adult Employment Coordinator at Waite House Neighborhood Center. September 15, 2010.
- ^{xi} "Models of Sustainability for Community Technology Programs." *City of Seattle Community Technology Program*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cityofseattle.net/tech/reports/sustainability.htm>
- ^{xii} "CTC Net Start Up Manual." Retrieved from: <http://www.ctcnet.org/what/resources/ctcnetmanual/ch4.pdf>
- ^{xiii} Ibid
- ^{xiv} Bret Byfield. *Phone Conversation*. October 11, 2010.
- ^{xv} Personal Interview with Doug Fountain, former X-Committee Member. November 1st, 2010.
- ^{xvi} Voices for Change Focus Group at Listening House. October 12, 2010.
- ^{xvii} Dharma Dailey et al. Broadband adoption in low income communities. Social Science Research Council Report. March 2010
- ^{xviii} Servon, Lisa J. 2002. *Bridging the Digital Divide: Technology, Community and Public Policy*. Blackwell Publishers, Malden.
- ^{xix} Mark Knipping, Open Access Connections Voice Mail User. Broadcast Response, Fall 2010.
- ^{xx} Twin Cities Survey, Broadcast, and Focus Group Responses, Fall 2010.
- ^{xxi} Wellness Center Site Visit. December 2, 2010.
- ^{xxii} Dorothy Day Site Visit. December 9, 2010.
- ^{xxiii} Opportunity Center Site Visit. November 9, 2010.
- ^{xxiv} Personal Interview with Doug Fountain, former X-Committee Member. November 1st, 2010.
- ^{xxv} Ibid
- ^{xxvi} Personal Interview with Angelina Nguyen, former worker at Asian Community Technology Center (Part of Broadband Access Project). October 22, 2010.
- ^{xxvii} Site Visit, PPL. October 18, 2010.
- ^{xxviii} Waite House Neighborhood Center Site Visit. October 13, 2010.
- ^{xxix} Personal Interview with Angelina Nguyen, former employee at Asian Community Technology Center (Part of Broadband Access Project). October 22, 2010.
- ^{xxx} People Serving People Site Visit, October 13, 2010.
- ^{xxxi} Waite House Neighborhood Center Site Visit. October 13, 2010.
- ^{xxxii} Dorothy Day Site Visit. December 9, 2010.
- ^{xxxiii} Waite House Neighborhood Center Site Visit. October 13, 2010.
- ^{xxxiv} "CTC Net Start Up Manual." Retrieved from: <http://www.ctcnet.org/what/resources/ctcnetmanual/ch4.pdf>
- ^{xxxv} Settani, Catherine, founder of Community Technology Empowerment AmeriCorps Project and digital literacy advocate. *Personal Interview*. September 29, 2010.
- ^{xxxvi} CTC Start Up Manual. 2003. CTC Net. Retrieved from: http://ctcnet.org/what/resources/startup_manual.htm

-
- ^{xxxvii} Personal Interview with Catherine Settani, founder of the Community Technology Empowerment AmeriCorps Project and digital literacy advocate. September 29, 2010.
- ^{xxxviii} Site Visit, PPL and Minneapolis Central Library. October 18, 2010 and October 13, 2010.
- ^{xxxix} Site Visit, PPL. October 18, 2010.
- ^{xl} Personal Interview with Open Access Connections Outreach worker Manuel Moore. December 9, 2010.
- ^{xli} Site Visit, Workforce Center. October 18, 2010.
- ^{xlii} Waite House Neighborhood Center Site Visit. October 13, 2010.
- ^{xliii} Personal Interview with David Jordahl, advocate for homeless individuals and web developer for the Community Services and Resources Network for Minnesota. October 13, 2010.
- ^{xliv} Site Visit, St. Stephen's Computer Lab. November, 4, 2010.
- ^{xlv} Settani, Catherine, founder of Community Technology Empowerment AmeriCorps Project and digital literacy advocate. *Personal Interview*. September 29, 2010.
- ^{xlvi} Zimmer, Jeanne F, Program and Evaluation Specialist, UROC Broadband Access Project. *Personal Interview*. November 5, 2010.
- ^{xlvii} Settani, Catherine, founder of Community Technology Empowerment AmeriCorps Project and digital literacy advocate. *Personal Interview*. September 29, 2010.
- ^{xlviii} Community Services and Resources Network for Minnesota. Retrieved from:
<http://csrnetwork.yuku.com/>

Appendices

To the Report:

Envisioning an Internet Center for Homeless Individuals:

One Group's Quest to Reduce the Digital Divide

Table of Contents for Appendices

Appendix A (Potential Candidates to work within Center)

Appendix B (Survey, Broadcast, and Focus Group Responses)

Appendix C (Survey Questions Used)

Appendix D (Known Community Technology Centers)

Appendix E (Known Community Technology Centers within Shelters and Transitional Housing Sites)

Appendix F (Gaps in Service for St. Paul Homeless Population)

Appendix A

The content of this Appendix is not accessible to the public because of confidentiality. This appendix contains the names of individuals.

Appendix B

Twin Cities Survey, Broadcast, and Focus Group Responses

Based on two broadcasts sent out to Open Access Connections voice mail users, tabling at Listening House twice, tabling at Harbor Lights Twice, Tabling at Dorothy Day once, and tabling at Project Homeless Connect at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Also includes answers from focus groups. All names have been omitted for privacy reasons.

1) How do you access the internet? Have you been to the library and other public places to access the internet? What has been your experience there? If you haven't been to any why have you not?

1. "I access internet at the library and workforce center. Overall the experience is good. Of course time on the internet is limited due to others waiting."
2. "Don't access, lots of people (like himself) who are homeless are semi-illiterate and don't know how to access (the internet) or spell good, you should be addressing that, even if there was access, we wouldn't know how to use it"
3. "No"
4. "I don't use computers, not yet, my girl wants me to learn"
5. "No"
6. "Library"
7. "The computers at the Listening House are dinosaurs"
8. "I waste time when I go to the library, and use the internet for one hour and wait for 3 hours. At library, one hour, you wait for 50, 70, 120 minutes to get access"
9. "Internet, no, I don't know how to do that"
10. "I waste time"
11. "I cannot spell, so what good is it, how am I going to say anything? I'm happy with the old way, I don't want to learn computers, I don't have any loved ones to communicate with." Said by older man
12. "Library, not enough time"
13. "Access internet through library, friend's homes, Mary Hall, Dorothy Day, coffee shops"
14. "Mostly my experiences have been EXCELLENT! Computers are SUPER FAST, but when the libraries are full, the experience is upsetting to wait for a computer."
15. "Minneapolis Main Library, 5 cents a copy, 2 hour limit"
16. "Dorothy Day 9:30/10-11:30, sometimes open in afternoon as well particularly for residents...Metropolitan University Library, I've found out how I can use different parts of the library to access internet for a total of 4 hours a day- go to St. Paul library for the rest. I also access the internet on my phone."
17. "I go to the central library, Dayton's bluff, and Metro College. I like the library because they have everything I need"
18. "I usually go to the St. Paul Workforce Center on University and Fairview in St. Paul"
19. "Library, yes, need way more than one hour to get anything done". Then, in response to someone saying that there was computer access at Dorothy Day: "I live at Dorothy Day, it's crooked if they have internet access and they're not telling anyone about it."

20. "Don't know how to compute
21. "At my friend's house."
22. "I currently don't really. Just wherever I can find a computer or the library of course."
23. "I got email and I don't even know how to use it."
24. "The internet is bad news.- too many drug dealers and sex offenders."
25. "City Passport, there's help there."
26. "Sometimes I go to the library and sometimes I got to a friend's house. Time limit and hours are most always convenient."
27. "I have been to the library (downtown Minneapolis) and I usually use the net for an hour. So far I have used guest passes and have had decent service there. There are many computers, however, I can't use my time as comfortably as I would like. There is a lot of erratic energy there and I need a place to focus and research various interests."
28. "I mostly access through my cell phone. Yes, I use library and other public places. I find the experience fair, considering it's a mass amount of people using the computer, overall very good."
29. "The only computer I need is inside my ears"
30. "I have tried the library, but recently reconnected with Qwest and am not happy. I have a computer in my home."
31. "Don't use computers, but interested."
32. "Yes, I have access to the Internet." I have been to the library to access the internet. It was an okay experience, I'm not very fond of the lines and wait time though. And time limits could be longer.
33. "Yes, Metro State, been very good."
34. "Front desk at Listening House, they look up things and print out things for me. I don't know how to read so someone has to read what they print out to me."
35. "I can, I just don't do it (access the internet). I'm too busy doing other stuff. If I were to access the internet I'd do it at a friend's place."
36. "The library"
37. "I have a laptop at my apartment but I got to take it into the shop, I have wifi in my apartment and there's also coffee shops, the library. There are so many coffee shops with wifi, like Dunn Brothers"
38. "No computer skills!"
39. "Public library, yes, I've always been able to use a computer."
40. I have tried to access apt's (apartments?/appointments?) on Internet. Haven't been successful.
41. "I have been to library to use the computer, but generally do not go. Between the wait and lack of privacy I tend not to go."
42. "My phone and the library. At the library it was a good experience."
43. "Library and other public places."
44. "I don't have a card to access the computer at the library. They only give you one hour anyways, that's not enough time to do anything."
45. "I don't have a library card right now, if I did I would access the internet at the library. I haven't been there recently since I don't have a card. It was a good experience."

46. "If you don't have a credit card, you can't get on (the internet). Qwest wanted \$120. I have two computers but I can't get on the internet because of not being able to afford wifi. Lots of people block their network. They sell you a computer, but you can't get on the internet. Libraries have access if you have a card, but if you're not familiar with the internet, you could spend a whole hour just trying to get on. Computers have advanced so fast. I made a mistake when I was younger and got in prison, and when I came out so much had changed. IT's gotten to the point where people go to schools to learn computer skills and as soon as they come out all their skills are obsolete. It's hard to find a manual labor job these days since computers have replaced all the factory jobs. There's no job for me anymore- I used to do injection molding, factory work, but now 95% is replaced by computers. The only good thing about computers is that they give you good access to medical information for doctors. I'm 54 years old, my grandson knows more about computers than I do."
47. "I have two computers, one laptop and one tower (pc). With both I have trouble getting access because of living on the streets. I don't have a credit card, if you ain't a customer you can't use."
48. "Library, word, unemployment, MCTC, not enough time, rush"
49. "At the library, it was a good experience"
50. "Public library"
51. No access, things online aren't very informative
52. "Library, fair experience, not enough time, online only for an hour at a time"
53. "Use it for email, job search, educational advancement, library- Ethernet not working, computers all taken, not enough time"
54. "Yes, at the library, good experience"
55. "I don't mess with the internet, too much porn, crazy things going on"
56. "Nowhere"
57. "Public Access- Workforce center doesn't give everyone enough time on the computers to get much done. Printer use is limited. Access to computers has also been limited to (contacting) employers and work related things. Self employment, education and general knowledge is usually not allowed. Advanced software, tutorial software, and research is generally not available, such as illustrator or photoshop."
58. "1)Library 2)Workforce Center"
59. "Library"
60. "Internet on phone for \$57 a month"
61. "The library"
62. "Yes, I get on the internet"
63. "In downtown Central Library and East Lake Library. My experience at Central is excellent (I can get access anytime I want but the on East Lake most of the time has a 30 min to an hour waiting time."
64. "Mostly at library- Minneapolis wi-fi doesn't work anymore."
65. "Public Library"
66. "Public Library, very good access, plenty of computers and high speed"
67. "Yes, it was a good experience"

68. "I don't know nothing about the internet, I don't even know how to use a cell phone. I'm not interested in learning how to use computers, just getting housing first."
69. "I don't do computers."
70. "Library, no problems except printing fees."
71. "No- No library card or ID"
72. "I use internet at a family member's house"
73. I access the internet at home, work, and the library. The experience has been great, except when I had to scan something I needed help.
74. Very good- library
75. I use the internet on my cell phone
76. I don't know how to use a computer
77. Don't access computers, I know how to get on them, I just have no interest. When you're on the street, I just go by what people tell me, and it's normally pretty good.
78. Yes, Library, Ok, sometimes they are busy.
79. No, don't know how to.
80. Yes, used for library book order, music and movie.
81. At the library. Yes. Good experiences.
82. Library- busy, not enough time to do certain job requests (time limit on computers)
83. Yes, the library. Play on the computer, like it and it's helpful.
84. At the library or work. My experiences were ok I could say.
85. Library
86. No transportation, but when possible I go to the library
87. 1-2 times a week at the library
88. Library, good
89. Uptown Library (60 min a visit) and Ebenezer towers (20 min a visit)

2) If there was an internet center what kinds of things would you like to see there (coffee, printers, couches etc), and what would you like to do on the computers?

What would make a place comfortable for you to use computers?

1. "The internet center should have all the accessories, copies, fax, telephones, research, stations, coffee, snacks, help aides."
2. "More Coffee"
3. "Coffee, printers, couches, there's lots of info on the internet"
4. "Computers and internet"
5. "I'm computer illiterate"
6. "I need to learn how to spell, the internet won't do me no good"
7. "Printers free, couches or chair and volunteer people for help"
8. "Pop to drink instead of coffee"
9. "Relaxed setting to complete business (School, unemployment, e-mail, etc)
10. "Like to see MORE computers, couches, soda pop"
11. "Printers, volunteers to help"
12. I use the internet to check email, work on my website, download resumes,
13. "Computers, printers- I check email, go on facebook, and play games"

14. "A safe environment where I could look up housing, jobs, etc."
15. "I would not care so much for the refreshments, but FREE printers, fax, and copy machines, and my suggestion for making the place comfortable would be to have laptops to use on the couches and chairs, with some type of theft protection"
16. "Cribbage, Chess"
17. "I would like to use computer classes for different software applications (word, excel, powerpoint, Mavis Beacon), make sure equipment, ..[software etc.] is what is used in most offices. I think programs that help people with literacy would be good"
18. "All of these ideas sound great, a comfortable atmosphere is always better. Maybe classes and brush up skill would be helpful and longer time slots or ability to return and help with programs and services including faxes just in case would be good. Reasonable hours and a weekend day might be beneficial to some people."
19. "All the mentions above"
20. "Learn how to send email, and learn how to transfer files."
21. "Solitaire and finding out different things."
22. "Coffee, water, bathroom, couches, cds/floppy disk (materials available), classes and help, information on possible resources at computer lab and internet."
23. "Facebook & look for work"
24. "Acronyms, my own thing like facebook, I want to find an idea on the internet that hasn't been thought of yet, that I could make a lot of money off of and be patented, and be an overnight success. The most important things towards making a center comfortable would be for the people there to show me respect and for there to be a tutor for me."
25. "Get out of the cold, and play on the computers, surf the webs, check email"
26. "Yes, good idea, I need all the help I can get. I'd want to check my email, or do whatever I was in the mood for that day, maybe see what's going on in the world."
27. "Somebody to teach me internet skills!"
28. "Access to a phone would be great, and maybe an advisor. Printing would be free also."
29. "Fast pull up of sites with out sign in"
30. "Must be private like cubicles. I would use it for job search, email, and such depending on how many people were there. It should be a comfortable and safe place to go."
31. "It's a bad idea to have coffee, people will spill on the computers, and then the computer won't work. Printers would be a good idea. IF there's couches, people will talk and not focus on work, and be distracting to other people, so that's a bad idea too. There should be case workers around if people want help. I'd want to do job search, web page, e-mail."
32. "Printers and someone computer literate to help guide me through."
33. "Coffee, printers, internet help if you need it, the time to do the things you need to do."
34. "All of the above (coffee, printers, couches) plus people to assist me because not everyone knows how to use computers. Look for work, study, entertainment."

35. "I'd like to be able to work with the computer for him and artist, these days everything is mass production plus it would help me to communicate to other artists and lawyers that I can't do with out it. Phones are too slow and so is mail. Easier access for everyone. To do studies and art for it's hard for myself to get connected on my ideas.
36. "Phone book, list of job sites, shelter, help ads, curtsy of people, patience from staff"
37. "People that would help you find jobs and make resumes, coffee"
38. "Coffee, share thoughts"
39. Free place, coffee, printers, couches, make the process of getting on the internet orderly and have resources, have people there to help you get on computer
40. "Coffee, chairs, couches, laptop rental maybe, printers, lots of light but low glare"
41. "Coffee, printers, couches, help, privacy"
42. "Coffee, Tea, printers, couches, access internet, A drop in center, There are lots of centers in San Francisco, there's a woman's drop in center in Washington state with laundry and 5 computers, I was surprised to find they didn't have those here"
43. I would like to go to Indeed (job search website) to find a job
44. "All of the above should be changed to make the most of employment and education opportunities. Advanced classes with on hand instructors and tutors are needed. Games such as Farmville and YouVille (games on Facebook) are excellent ways to learn life skills such as budgeting money, buying homes, and saving for what you need/want"
45. Search Jobs, affordable houses, check and reply to email, international news
46. "Snacks, bus tokens, job leads and resources, internet sites, information on where I can get clothes"
47. "Coffee, printers, chairs, tables, couches"
48. "Jobs, apartments, shelters"
49. "Couches, coffee, read and watch the news, look for jobs, fast access"
50. "Coffee, printers, and couches are nice, but just a convenient place to go online is what's important."
51. "Coffee, printers, couches, scanners, job search"
52. "Printers would be nice. I like to search obscure facts. Clean, quiet, safe place."
53. "Somewhere to sit, something to drink, go on yahoo for email, games, housing lists , and contacts anywhere."
54. "What I like to do online: Facebook, email, and job search. But unlimited access to the internet with no restrictions can cause problems that may be inappropriate"
55. "Game, chat, look up things, browse"
56. I'd like to do job search and connect with family etc. Yes, someone that is stationed there as a job who could help people that need help at all levels. It would be a comfortable place if there was a lot of availability of times that it was open.
57. All of the above
58. I would like it to be peaceful & coffee there. I like to play games on the computer, get on facebook, and look for jobs.
59. Contact family and friends.
60. Interested in learning, would want to learn how to do things like find housing.

61. Coffee, couches
62. Coffee, tea, printers, scanners, couches, job searches, email, availability.
63. Printers/fax/scanners, friendly staff, quiet atmosphere
64. Coffee, play games, craigslist, assistance using the computer
65. I would like it to be comfortable maybe, a box that would enough for a person and computer, so there isn't much noise. Research, job search, housing searches.
66. Job search and email
67. All of these things and fundraising center for donations
68. Food, drinks, printers, community resources
69. Phones and couches
70. Hot Chocolate, Coffee, Warm Tea, A warm place with a printer

3) Would you be interested in helping others learn how to use computers? If so, what is your name and contact information? (Note: People who said they were not interested or did not have time, and people who said they were interested, but didn't leave their name were deleted). A lot of people expressed interest in helping, once they learn more skills themselves.

(For privacy reasons, the names of the individuals who responded here have been omitted from this version of the report)

Broadcasts Transcribed

The broadcast messaging system works by having Open Access Connections send out a "broadcast message" that automatically messages everyone who has a voice mail number with them. When these individuals check their voice mail they will receive the message, and then they have the option of responding. In the past Open Access Connections has used this broadcast messaging system to solicit information from homeless individuals that will educate legislators on the issues relevant to them.

"Yes, I'd like to see some computer access, for homeless to low income (people), just being able to access email and do job searches, and do different things on the computer would be very helpful, thank you."

"Yeah, it would be lovely if there was some type of place where we could use the computer for over an hour. At the library they used to, but then they cut it down. A friendly environment where we can look for housing and try to find jobs, that would help out a lot of homeless people like myself to find resources and other things that we need to get through the wintertime and also the summertime, that would be great. I hope it gets up and running real soon."

"My experience has been that the internet is only available if you go to a coffee shop on wifi (but you need a wifi device), or the library. The problem with the library is that you get an hour and people don't want to do work on the internet, they want to watch a movie or listen to music or play games. This is limiting when you want to look for housing or employment, so you have to wait an hour and are lumped into the same pool (as those

playing games), you're not lumped into a pool of someone actually just looking for work or housing, so thank you."

"Yeah, it's a beautiful thing to have access to the internet, my access has been limited to the public library and my school- if there was someplace that donated computers or a safe environment to use computers openly it would be nice thing where people such as myself, low income, could use, alright that's my comment."

"Hey, I think this internet idea is a great idea- I'm able to get online and access my free yahoo and gmail account, but I still don't know how to work some of the features so I think this idea is great for educating purposes so we can stay up with the times and stay connected. I would support this with all my heart, I'd love to see it staffed with people who are pretty good with computers and who have patience and all that, but I think this is a wonderful idea."

"Hi, yes I have used computers at the public library and you only get an hour so I'd like to see something that's longer and more focused on just being able to be there with no time limit. I'd also like to get some keyboard experience."

Hi, I live in Mankato and it would be nice to have something. I'm not very experienced with computers and it would be very helpful to learn more about them and be able to get on them and do things more by myself than to have to ask for help all the time so it would be highly appreciated if something like that would be started up. Thank you.

Hi, I like the idea of the internet being available, but it's impossible, (except outside of a hospital), to get a phone next to a computer. You can print out stuff at the job service (say Craigslist) and then go over to the phone and call it in, and I've heard that there's one chance in 300 if you paper the town with your resume, but if you call them and you say "hey I have an email or a fax coming in, could you look out for it, and get them to like you first, they read it differently. Then you have a one chance in 24 of getting a job. So I'm hoping to have you let us the phone too, or else tolerate us putting in a microphone in, so we could use the google phone, right there on the computer. Well thanks."

Broadcast #2

"With regards to a computer center, I would like to be helping and part of that. I'm currently looking for employment and I need some more help with computer skills, but I would be willing to learn, and willing to show others. You can give me a call back and let me know, I and I would like the hours to use a computer to be longer to use a computer since I'm currently on a bus schedule, and only have transportation for a bus, and it only runs to certain points since I'm in Shoreview. Please give me a call back."

"Hi, thank you for this message. Yes, I am interested in a center where anyone could come and use the internet for free because I am a part time worker, I don't earn that much money, I only work 13 hours a week. It's enough to pay my rent, because I have

subsidized rent, but it's not enough money for to have internet at home. Obviously I'm not homeless, I have an apartment, but if the center was just for homeless people I don't think that would be a good idea because then people who already knew how to use the computer wouldn't be able to use the internet there when they needed it. Right now I'm able to go to libraries and stuff to use the internet, but it would be great to have other access. Maybe at the center that you're developing people could volunteer to teach people how to use computers, and then that would give them access as well. I'd be interested in a job at your new place, if you're hiring when it starts."

"I had been utilizing several resources in Duluth, Minnesota, and since then I've gained knowledge and I'd like to share that experience with you with that part of my education. It really did help me I would like to probably see if not a bigger area for these computers, I'd like to see some partitions would be made so that they would no interference from the outside or from other participants, and would like to say that when and where a person could use your computers at the center. Again I'm in Duluth, Minnesota, and there's various places where you can access computers, but it gets to a point where you no longer are able to use these computers, for reasons being that you've utilized every resource that you have and currently other people have gotten involved with resources and you're left out. Other than that, if there's a way to access these computers without any hindrance, that would be a very good cause for you, thank you.

"Hi, I am a voice mail user, I do have a voice mail, and I think it would be good, I'm 45 years old, and I don't know anything about computers, and one of the things that I have when I go to the job centers, is that when I try to put an application in, it's hard for me to do because I don't know anything about computers, I mean nothing, the only thing I know how to do is how to turn it on. If you have someone on site who could really help you, I mean, log on to what you really want to log on. I mean I think that's why I don't have a job it's because I'm a nursing assistant, and It's hard for me to do an online application. So, yes, I do think that would be a good idea for open access to things"

"I would like something that's reasonably close to my home, I'm relatively close to Dale and University, and I'd like the hours to be as broad as possible because I don't know when I'd have time to do job hunting and the rest of the stuff that takes up some of my daytime hours. Rondo is only open for job search and homework and stuff like that a few hours a day. So generally, a broad spectrum of hours if possible, and that's pretty much it. Thanks."

"Yeah, I essentially have no computer access, I have one working computer and one that's broken down. The nearest place from where I'm at that I can access public computers is the library, which is 10 blocks away. So, not many options for me. So, that's all I have to say."

"Yes, I'd like to make a comment. I would like to see an internet center that actually has more computers and also for most people that are in low income areas they are looking for jobs, maybe you could have a job person on site that could help match up skills with

some current employers, that's my comment, and thanks for looking at my comment, that's kind of what I would like to see, thanks.

“Well, what I would look for is a more one to one computer interaction with someone who would take the time to help an individual with email and to find applications, fill them out and send them back to the employer, and help with housing and that perspective there. I believe that if this service would provide that it would be very helpful.”

“Yes, I think we need more computer awareness for people who are homeless. even more applications for them. We use computers at Dorothy Day because I go over there, but not enough time. I don't think enough people know the benefits of the information that they can find, maybe something could be given out that shows the things the internet can provide.”

“Hi, most of the time when I go places, spreadsheets, excel, access, and powerpoint is the stuff they want you know. Thank you, thanks for the message.”

Oh, hey, yeah I go to the library a lot for the internet, but I do need to learn how to use it better. There's a lot of times in sending emails or stuff or trying to send out job resumes that they just don't get through. Or even getting emails, you need to have this kind of attachment or that type of attachment, and the libraries doesn't have it. And then a lot of stuff is filtered, they've got so many filters on there, that some websites you can't even get to. I think if you're going to let people use the computer, let them have any access to the computer, you know.

Hi, I currently have a personal laptop, my only problem is I have to be at the library in order to get free wifi or a place like Kinkos or a coffee shop. They all have limited hours. Sometimes I get my best work done in the middle of the night, since I'm homeless, I'm trying to stay awake at night, and sleep in the day when it's warmer. I would like to see some free wifi or free access to the Minneapolis public wifi system with a passcode that we could get, that's not free to everybody in the world, but come up with some system where we could have access to the system with certain passwords or something. Then we (homeless individuals) could get in there and they'd still be making their money off of people who have money to spend. I don't know, maybe it's a crazy idea, but that's what I would like to see happen. Free wifi for those of us who cant' afford to pay for it. With free wifi I'd be able to pick it up almost anywhere at 2 am, just sitting in my car. That's something else I wish someone could come up with money for gasoline. It's expensive, but I have to run my car once in a while to stay warm. It's a dream- some day I might get myself out of debt and out of the hole, but thank you for listening to me. If anyone wants to talk to me my number is {omitted}. I have a cell phone it' doesn't work half the time.

Advisory Focus Group October 12th, 2010

Question: Who here has accessed computers at non profits?

Answer: Goodwill across the street has a computer lab-doesn't know who's eligible. Thinks hours are around 9-3.

Most non profits have limited hours for their CTCs and only allow their participants.

Question: When you go to libraries or other places with public computer labs is there someone there who can help you, or are workforce center staff and librarians too busy?

Answer: “When I get onto the computer I don’t know where to go. I was new to town and looking for housing and didn’t know where to go.”

Question: Are there any public computer labs you know of in shelters?

Answer: “I don’t know of any.”

“Simpson used to have computers, but cut them out. St. Steven’s has computers, but they don’t display correctly. They really only want you to do job search and email.”

Question: What would you like to do on computers?

Answer: Look for jobs, find housing, food places, wasting time, health, google searches and looking up other info, typing

Question: What would you like to have at center?

Answer: Have Magic Jack, Skype, typing programs, have a copier and a scanner, flash drives, ability to upload photos/take photos, printers

Question: People at Listening House mentioned that there was a lot of fighting around people using computers since there were too many people who wanted to use computers and not enough computers. How could we prevent this from happening?

Answer: Assign people who have mental illnesses or who take a lot of time on the computers specific times to come in

Question: How often do you go on computers and where do you go?

Answer: “20 minutes a day-email, safe websites, magic jack. Go through office downtown, get 4 hours”

“no computer usage”

“Workforce center for one hour, sometimes longer, Minneapolis library 2 hours”

“ At home at work, phone has internet”

“ Downtown library, all day sometimes bumped, you can be on for one hour at a time, but it’s extended by 15 minutes for an infinite amount of time as long as no one’s waiting. If you sign off every 30 minutes you can generally avoid getting booted, and your time will start up again.”

“ Church email, drop in centers, 10 min a day”

“ I have internet at home, old computer, also uses goodwill and workforce center, library during the week”

Focus Group at Listening House. October 6, 2010

Suggestions for center

-Limit time so there’s no conflict, but need enough time for people to do what they need to do on computers (long job applications etc)

-Make sure computers are in good working order.

-Have fresh refreshments-at Dorothy Day refreshments aren’t fresh.

-Have a huge monitor/flat screen/cable tv, CSPAN, programs etc

-Have a system to decide who will decide what’s on tv?

- Have someone in charge so that people know who does what, and limits the amount of bullying going on.
- Have some kind of instruction (People need attention to learn computer skills, classes at libraries aren't enough)
- Have a way that people can download things/save things-you can't do that at the library. St. Paul libraries have one hour limit, workforce centers normally have one hour limit too unless there aren't people waiting.
- have a place that is quiet and a place where you can take naps
"don't have budget cuts and have to shut down"
- Have printers/copiers so can print out resumes
- provide people with flash drives
- have a way for people to personalize the computer (online backup, min computer on flash drive"
- keep the place clean, fresh scented
- have a way to deal if fights break out
- Make sure equipment works
- Have music
- give positive feedback/be inviting and build confidence in instructing people
- there's a high level of phobia and resistance, need to build confidence and respect
Librarians have attitude- don't show you how to do stuff, they feel like it's not their job to teach
- have comfortable furniture
- skype accounts
- have a support system for kids to teach them how to verbalize themselves and leadership skills
- have a school, teach more than games, how to repair and program computers, how to use them for education, know how to operate computers and hardware
- keep people out who try to deal drugs
- People want to use computers to get a job, pay cell phone bill online, Simon was told 30-40 times a day, "just look us up online". Even if homeless, you should be able to have fun online.
- "have experts who come in to teach people more than computer games"

Comments

- "Kids don't know how to communicate verbally-have a way that kids can develop verbal skills and incorporate other communication." However, have excellent computer skills. On the other hand older people have no computer skills.
- "A surprisingly number of people at Dorothy Day have laptops, I can think of 12-15 people (out of 200) with laptops. Use all of their money to get laptops. People who got SSI". The rest go the library branch of 18 computers. Most people at the library are from shelters.
- "on the street you can pick up a 5-10 year old laptop in various stages of use"
- 8-9 years ago there was more access for people who were homeless-more workforce centers
- coffee shops used to have more computers, now just have wifi, but doesn't help if you don't own a laptop.
- libraries had looser time restraints.

Now put your card in and when the times up you can't use the entire library system in St. Paul for 24 hours.

"Tried to fill out Americorps application and couldn't finish in time, application is complicated."

-Listening house doesn't have internet access in part because they didn't want to deal with fights breaking out over computer time limits or other things involving the internet

-"I'm not into computer games"

-business skills

-leadership skills

"How do you access the internet?"

"I use it every day, would be lost without it."

Appendix C

1) How do you access the internet? Have you been to the library and other public places to access the internet? What has been your experience there? If you haven't been to any why have you not?

2) If there was an internet center what kinds of things would you like to see there (coffee, printers, couches etc), and what would you like to do on the computers?
What would make a place comfortable for you to use computers?

3) Would you be interested in helping others learn how to use computers? If so, what is your name and contact information?

Appendix D

Known Community Technology Centers (CTCs)

All information is based off of data collected Fall/Winter 2010 through phone verifications, website information, and information released by agencies. Only centers that provide free access to computers have been included. Information is only as accurate as the information given. All efforts have been made to ensure accuracy, but as times in CTCs change often, before arriving please verify that the center will be open when you plan to visit.

Name	Address	City	Hours	Notes
Arlington Hills Library	1105 Greenbrier St. 651-783-3930	St. Paul	Mon, Wed 12-8, Tues, Thurs, Fri, Sat 11-5:30, Sun Closed	St. Paul Public Library
Ascension Place	1803 Bryant Avenue N 612- 588-0861	Minneapolis	Limited hours, individuals sign up for time slots	Ascension place houses thirty-two women suffering from mental illness and/or chemical dependency, Open to shelter residents, one computer available, Limited Hours, women sign up for time slots
Asian Community Technology Center	417 University Ave, 651-224-6570	St. Paul	Mon-Fri 10:30-7	Open to anyone, not only Asian Americans, Hmong assistance available, BTOP funded lab
Asian Media Access	4640 Lyndale Ave N 612- 376-7715	Minneapolis	Call for hours	Not walk in, only for clients. Work with high school youth in creating digital media

Brackett Recreation Center	2728 39th Ave. S 612 370-4924	Minneapolis	Monday through Thursday, 1:30 to 8:30pm	All ages. Stop in our computer lab for fun, interactive games and educational software. Learn everything from basic keyboarding to layout and design. Stop in for help with your papers or design your own pictures and artwork. We have everything you need. In addition, we have wonderful learning tools for youth to make the computer experience fun and educational. You can sign up for 1/2 hour at a time. Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Bryant Square Rec Center	3101 Bryant Ave. S 612 370-4907	Minneapolis	Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday: 4:00pm - 8:00pm Thursday: 2:00pm - 8:00pm Friday: 12:00pm - 5:00pm	"We have computers with games available for everyone to use. So, whether you have homework to do, you want to improve your computer skills or just want to have some fun playing games, the computers are available. The Bryant Square staff is ready to assist." Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Business Resource Center at the Northside Economic Development Center	1505 W. Broadway Ave 612- 738-5483	Minneapolis	By appointment only	Computer and internet access for entrepreneurs from the West Broadway corridor and Entrepreneur Training classes as well as one-on-one computer training.
Business Resource Center at the Rondo Library (The BRC computers with assistance for entrepreneurs are located near the reference desk after entering the main doors)	461 N. Dale Street 651- 291-2480	Minneapolis	Mon-Thurs: 10-9, Fri & Sat 10-5:30, Sun 1-5	Walk ins are welcome. Includes computer and internet access for entrepreneurs from the University Avenue corridor as well as one-on-one computer training with a focus on business skills and software. The Rondo Library location staff speak English and Hmong.

Business Resource Center- Eastside inside Neighborhood Development Center	965 Payne Ave 651- 291-2480	St. Paul	By appointment only	Only for those needing help with business development or who are enrolled in IDA Savings Program through Lutheran Social Services, English and Spanish available (very limited number of computers available)
Business Resource Center- Global Market (Located inside the Midtown Global Market management office in the basement past Hennepin County Services, Managed by Neighborhood Development Center	920 E. Lake Street 651-291-8420	Minneapolis	By appointment only	For entrepreneurs from the Lake St. corridor and tenants of the Midtown Global Market as well as one-on-one computer training with a focus on business skills and software(very limited number of computers available)
Cathedral Hill Homes(150 residents)	280 Dayton Avenue 651-290-6243	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	Residents were very involved in the development of the lab, job search help available and other programming, HUD lab
Cecil Newman Resource Center	703 Emerson Ave N 612-374-1550	Minneapolis	Internet available Mon 1- 3, Tues 9-3, Wed 1-3, Thurs 9-3*	Computer classes available
Center for Asian and Pacific Islanders - CAPI	3702 E Lake St, Suite 200 612- 721-0122	Minneapolis	M-F 8-5	Assistance may or may not be available
Central St. Paul Library	90 West Fourth St., 651-	St. Paul	Mon 12-8, Tues-Sat 10:30-5:30, Sun 1-5	St. Paul Public Library
Centro	1915 Chicago Ave S, 612-874-1412	Minneapolis	Mon-Thurs: 8:30-10 am, 12pm -5, Fri:8:30-5	Assistance available in Spanish, BTOP funded
Centro de Informacion y Recursos	1515 E Lake St 612- 728-5438	Minneapolis	Mon-Fri 10am-7pm; Sat- Sun 12 noon-3pm	Help available in Spanish. Note: I am not positive that this center exists anymore, I have tried several time to verify their existance and each time no one answers the phone.

Church of St. Phillip/Family Enrichment Network	2507 Bryant Ave N, 612-529-3125	Minneapolis	Tues, Thurs: 8:30-6:30, Wed: 8:30-5:30, Fri: 8:30-4:30, Sun: 11-1	20 new computer stations to help adults, small business, and non-profit organizations in the community with employment and educational needs. Such as creating resumes, applying for jobs online, accessing government information, increasing employability with computer skills training, etc., BTOP funded lab
City Passport	Alliance Bank Building 55 East 5th St, Suite 203 651- 232-1301.	St. Paul	Mon- Fri 9-4	Geared at people aged 50 and over
CLUES (Minneapolis)	3751 17th Avenue South 612-465-8081	Minneapolis		
CLUES (St. Paul)	797 E 7th St 651-379-4215	St. Paul	Call for hours, based on volunteer availability	Career center to help primarily Spanish Speakers
Corcoran Rec Center	3332 20th Ave. S 612 370-4919	Minneapolis	Monday-Friday 1 to 9pm	All ages, youth and adult open lab. Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Creekview Recreation Center	5001 Humboldt Ave. N 612 370-4965	Minneapolis	During school year open Monday-Friday from 2-9 pm, and 10am-4pm on Saturday.	All ages. "Please come on down and feel free to use one of our 8 computers that we have available. Creekview does not have a printer to make copies." Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Dayton's Bluff	800 Conway Street, 651- 793-3885	St. Paul	Call for most recent schedule	For 13-17 year olds
Dayton's Bluff Library	645 East 7th St. 651-793-1699	St. Paul	Mon,Wed 12-8, Tues, Thurs, Fri, Sat 11-5:30, Sun 1-5	St. Paul Public Library

Dorothy Day (Catholic Charities)	183 Old 6th Street West, (651) 293-1919	St. Paul	M-F (9:30-11:30 2-4)	Not heavily advertised, new computers, many people who go to Dorothy Day do not know about it. It will be transitioning to a more employment focused lab with a recent grant that they received. When I visited it was only available to job searchers in the afternoon, now might be only job focused all the time. Someone is available to help
East Lake Library	2727 E. Lake St., 952-847-8425	St. Paul	Mon Closed, Tues, Thurs 12-8, Wed, Fri, Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5	Minneapolis Public Library
Eastside Neighborhood Services	1700 2nd St NE 612-787-4000	Minneapolis	8:30- 5p.m. Mon.- Thur; 8:30-noon Fri.	Free printing, only people looking for jobs can use computers and services
Elliot Recreation Center	1000 14th St. E 612 370-4772	Minneapolis	5 to 8pm, Monday through Friday	Youth only, open computer lab, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Emerge Community Development	1101 West Broadway Suite 200, 612-529-9267	Minneapolis	8:30-4:30 Mon-Fri	Emerge Community Development serves individuals and families by helping connect people who need jobs and housing with the sources they need to be successful in all aspects of life. The FREE resource and COMPUTER LAB is open Monday - Friday from 8:30am - 4:30pm. Emerge also offers free computer classes and employment readiness programs.
Emerge-Collaborative Village	2020 Elliot Ave 612-435-1529	Minneapolis	Call for schedule	Computers are available to job seekers who attend orientation, 1:1 job search support
Employment Action Center	503 North Irving Ave #100, 612-377-6300	Minneapolis	Private, call for hours if a client	For program participants only; must be referred by caseworker or other such program. only for employment

Employment Action Center	900 20th Ave S 612-752-8800	Minneapolis	Private, call for hours if a client	For program participants only; must be referred by caseworker or other such program. only for employment
Employment Action Center	2143 North Lowry Ave	Minneapolis	Private, call for hours if a client	For program participants only; must be referred by caseworker or other such program. only for employment
Employment Action Center	849 University Ave 612-752-8854	St. Paul	Private, call for hours if a client	For program participants only; must be referred by caseworker or other such program. only for employment
Employment Action Center	540 North Fairview Ave, 612-642-0747	St.Paul	Private, call for hours if a client	For program participants only; must be referred by caseworker or other such program. only for employment
Employment Action Center	2225 East Lake Street	Minneapolis	Private, call for hours if a client	For program participants only; must be referred by caseworker or other such program. only for employment
Exodus Residence (Catholic Charities)	819 2nd Avenue S.612-204-8330	Minneapolis	Private, Call for hours	Transitional Housing, Computer training sessions available
Fairview Recreation Center at Fairview Park	621 29th Ave. N 612 370-4922	Minneapolis	Monday-Friday 2-6 pm	Youth Computer Lab. "The Fairview Lab will be open after school for learning computer skills, doing homework or having some fun with your friends." Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Family Place (Catholic Charities)	244 10th St E,	St. Paul	Call for hours	Family Place is day center for families, they have the capacity to serve about 40 families at a given time
Fowell Community Center	1615 Dowling Ave N 612 370-4917	Minneapolis	Monday-Saturday, 1:30 to 5-6pm	All ages. "Come check out this invaluable community resource. We have all kinds of programs to keep you busy."
Franklin Library	1314 E. Franklin Ave., 952-847-2925	Minneapolis	Mon Closed, Tues, Thurs12-8, Wed, Fri, Sat 10-6, Sun Closed	Minneapolis Public Library, Computer classes available, call for details
Goodwill Easter Seals	553 Fairview Avenue N 651-379-5800	St. Paul	Call to ask- only for clients	Only for clients, job related

Guadalupe Alternative Programs	381 E Robie St 651-222-0757	St. Paul	Mon & Wed 6-8 pm	Adult computer classes Mon., Wed. 6p.m.-8p.m, Call for more information
Hamline-Midway Library	1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. 651-642-0293	St. Paul	Mon,Wed 12-8, Tues, Thurs, Fri, Sat 11-5:30, Sun Closed	St. Paul Public Library
Hayden Heights Library	1456 White Bear Ave. 651-642-0293	St. Paul	Mon,Wed 12-8, Tues, Thurs, Fri, Sat 10-5:30, Sun Closed	St. Paul Public Library
Hazel Park	945 N. Hazel Ave. 651-501-6350	St. Paul	Call for most recent schedule	Received six donated computers from Minnesota Computers for Schools (MCFS).The computer lab will be open to residents of all ages and staff members will be available on site to assist with research, homework and other learning opportunities.
Highland Park Library	1974 Ford Parkway 651-695-3700	St. Paul	Mon-Thurs10-9, Fri-Sat 10-5:30, Sun 1-5	St. Paul Public Library
Hillcrest	1978 Ford Parkway, 651-695-3706	St. Paul	Call for most recent schedule	Have video game animation classes
Hmong American Partnership (East)	1075 Arcade Street,651-495-9160	St. Paul	Wed: 8:30-5, Thurs: 8:30-1, Fri: 8:30-3	BTOP funded lab
Hmong American Partnership (North)	1206 42nd Ave N 612-377-6482	Minneapolis	Mon-Wed 8:30-5	BTOP funded lab
Hope Community, Inc.	611 East Franklin Avenue 612-435-1672 or 612-435-1677	Minneapolis	Call for hours if a participant	CTC is available for program participants in the Essential Skills program which meets 8:30 am - 12:30 pm, M-F
Hosmer Library	347 E. 36th St., 952-847-2900	Minneapolis	Mon Closed, Tues, Thurs12-8, Wed, Fri, Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5	Minneapolis Public Library

House of Charity's Computer Learning Center	510 8th St. S. 612-594-2000	Minneapolis	M-F 10-10, Sat 12-10	4 computers available , House of Charity is a multi-service program designed to minimize the root effects of poverty through-a soup kitchen, temporary and transitional housing, halfway house, workforce development and computer lab. Lab is only open to resident clients, recently moved to this new location
Hubb Center for Lifelong Learning	1030 University Avenue W 612-290-4822	St. Paul	Call for hours	Distance Learning Available
Jewish Community Center	1375 St. Paul Ave 651-255-4770	St. Paul	Mon-Wed. - 9:00am-12pm, 1:00pm-4:30pm	7 Macs and 2 PCs, high speed Internet, you can get to the Internet using Internet Explorer or Firefox, and each computer is equipped with the Microsoft suite of software. Printing is free for minimal pages. on.- Mon-Wed. - 9:00am-12pm, 1:00pm-4:30pm - During these times the lab is open for public use. There is no fee and no pre-registration is required
Jewish Vocational Service - Minneapolis	430 First Ave N, Suite 620 612-692-8920	Minneapolis	N/A	Computer classes vary. Call for appointment with a case manager.
Jimmy Lee	1063 Iglehart Avenue, 651- 298-5760	St. Paul	Call for most recent schedule	Offers computer classes
La Placita	927 Payne Ave 651-774-3964	St. Paul	M-F 10-7, Sat and Sun 10-4	It is a public resource center with a few computers, 2 computers available
Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota	503 Irving Ave N 612-374-4967	Minneapolis	Call for hours	

Liberty Plaza Resource Center (465 residents)	290 Arundel Street 651-224-5303	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	Offers a variety of different programming for residents, have 12 Intel P4 PCs, HUD lab- Only for residents, Liberty Plaza Resource Center houses multiple levels of programming for children and adults. On site, there are two computer labs accessible from 9AM to 6PM daily. The small computer lab houses 4 computers and the larger lab houses 8 computers. Persons may use the lab for job search, research, homework, and computer learning, HUD computer lab
Lifetrack Resources	709 University Ave, 651-227-8471	St. Paul	Mon-Thurs: 1-4:30, Fri: 1-4	Very popular and busy lab, BTOP funded
Lindon Hills Library	2900 W. 43rd St., 952-847-2825	Minneapolis	Mon Closed, Tues, Thurs 12-8, Wed, Fri, Sat 10-6, Sun Closed	Minneapolis Public Library
Listening House	215 9th St W 651-227- 5911	St. Paul	Available for use during Listening House open hours	4 (not connected to internet, only for games, unclear how many actually work, very old "dinosaurs" as described by one Listening House guest
Little Earth Community Technology Center (600 residents)	2438 18th Avenue South 612-455-2810	Minneapolis	Varies, call for details	Offers a variety of different programming for Native American Community, HUD lab-

				Classes only, in their most recent class that is now full participants were taught to "upgrade the computer's memory, replace cd/dvd drives. diagnose and replace the power supply, general maintenance and up keep of your computer, understanding the difference between a virus, melware trackers and how to repair them, where can you find info on errors, how to get a disk out of my dvd when the door will not open, how to set up administrator and user password, what you need to set up wireless, where can I buy parts, where to find cheap internet services, install programs and hardware on the computer, info on virus programs, how to buy the right computer and more. If you have a computer that needs some work bring it in and let the class work on it. You will need to supply parts."
Logan Park Recreation Center	690 13th Ave. NE 612 370-4927	Minneapolis		Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Lutheran Social Services Training and Education Center	2400 Park Ave. 612-879-5286	Minneapolis	9:00am- 4:30 Monday, Thursday, Friday and 1:00- 4:30 on Wednesday.	The TEC is open throughout the week and offers a space for clients to work on resumes, cover letters, applications, and job searching. Clients may work independently, or if desired they can work with the Training and Education Center staff to accomplish their goals for the day. Computer classes also available as well as a job support group.
Lyndale Neighborhood Association	3537 Nicollet Ave S 612-824-9202, ext. 12	Minneapolis	M-F 10-6	Classes available

Martin Luther King Recreation Center	4055 Nicollet Ave. S 612 370-4908	Minneapolis	Monday-Friday 3:30-8pm	All ages. "ML King computer lab is available to you for homework research, checking emails, surfing the web and many other activities. User time limits followed when necessary." Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Mary Hall (Catholic Charities)	215 Old 6th Street West, 651- 227-2637	St. Paul	Open 8 am to 10 pm for residents, men's shelter residents can use it for an hour in the evening for job/school purposes	10 Computers available. For residents and men's shelter, Assistance available
Mary's Place	401 North 7th Street 612- 338-4855	Minneapolis	Open 6 am-9, sometimes have help available for housing and job searches	5 computers, for residents
McDonough Community Center	1544 Timberlake Road 651-298-5231	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	HUD lab
Merriam Park	1831 Marshall Ave. 651-642-0385	St. Paul	Mon, Wed 12-8, Tues 10-8, Thurs-Sat 10-5:30, Sun Closed	St. Paul Public Library
MIGIZI Communications	3123 E Lake St 612-721-6631	Minneapolis	M-F 2-6 PM	Has classes available and a tech internship program. Programming for both youth and adults, health & GED
Minneapolis Central Library	300 Nicollet Mall, 952-847-8000	Minneapolis	Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat 10-6, Tues, Thurs, 10-8, Sun 12-5	Minneapolis Public Library Job assistance available during certain hours
Minneapolis Public Housing Glendale	92 St. Mary's Avenue Se, 612-342-1953	Minneapolis	Mon-Fri 8:30-5	BTOP funded lab

Minneapolis Television Network (MTN)	125 SE Main Street, Suite 244, 612- 331-8575	Minneapolis	Call for more details	Youth Programming, but also offer rentals to adults. MTN provides the residents of Minneapolis with tools, programs, and activities to engage and connect diverse residents and institutions through the exchange of ideas, stories, and information. In this way MTN strives to build a vibrant democracy in which all share social, cultural, and economic vitality. MTN began operations in 1984 with a mission to provide access to television broadcast equipment and to cable television channels for the diverse community.
Minnesota Council of Churches	122 West Franklin Avenue, Suite 100, 612-870-3600 ↑	Minneapolis	Call for hours of classes	Refugees enrolled in employment services can participate in ongoing training classes. The computer lab offers both basic and intermediate computing courses.
Minnesota Resource Center - St. Paul	1612 Como Ave, 612-752-8888	St. Paul	Private, call for hours if a client	For individuals with disabilities and for training
Minnesota Resource Center Minneapolis	2438 27th Ave S, Suite 100, 612-752-8100	Minneapolis	Private, call for hours if a client	For individuals with disabilities and for training
Mount Airy Community Center	91 Arch Street East, 651-228-3192	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	HUD lab
Mount Carmel Manor (65 residents)	1560 Bellows St. 651-451-0030	St. Paul	24/7 access for all residents	Educational programs for adults Technology literacy (e.g., Internet training, how to use basic software, how computers work): basic computer skills, intermediate computer skills, HUD lab
Neighborhood House/El Rio Vista Recreation Center (Located inside the Paul and Sheila Wellstone Center)	179 E Robie St 651-789-2540	St. Paul	Call for hours of classes	Computer classes and GED prep, adult literacy and distance learning available, 16 computer stations

Nokomis Library	5100 34th Avenue, 612-630-6700	Minneapolis	Closed for Renovation	
North Regional Library	1315 Lowry Avenue N, 952-847-8450	Minneapolis	Mon Closed, Tues, Thurs 12-8, Wed, Fri, Sat 10-6, Sun 10-5	Minneapolis Public Library
Northeast Recreation Center	1615 Pierce St. NE 612 370-4920	Minneapolis	Open when the recreation center is open, 3-9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 3-7 on Fridays	All ages."Northeast Computer lab is open to the public and is designed for students and adults to obtain computer and internet time to manage homework, internet searching, and computer programs outside of work and home. Please feel free to visit our computer lab or take advantage of our Wi-Fi at Northeast Park during lab hours." Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Northside Child Development Center	1000 Plymouth Avenue N 612-204-8575	Minneapolis	Call for most recent schedule	Only for clients. Courtesy of Best Buy, Northside received two sets of computers, one for school-age children and one for the teen room.
Operation de Novo	800 Washington Ave 612-348-4005	Minneapolis	Just starting one up, just got grant by Digital Inclusion Fund	Clients only who have been referred by Hennepin County Court
Opportunity Center (Catholic Charities)	740 17th Street East 612-204-8300	Minneapolis	8 AM- 2PM M-F	8 computers, open 8-2, mostly for job purposes, but if not crowded, they'll let people use them for other purposes, have representatives from goodwill Easter seals, and 3 AmeriCorp members to help people out

Our Saviors Community Services- English Learning Center	2315 Chicago Avenue South,612-871-5900	Minneapolis	Call for hours	Helps empower immigrant and refugee adults and their families towards self-determination. What does that mean? Our students study English, math, computers, and prepare for citizenship exams. Also have a job club for housing residents in Our Savior's Housing. (Tore Simonsen says computers are old)
Park Avenue Youth & Family Services	3400 Park Ave, 612- 825-6863	Minneapolis	Call for hours	Spanish Assistance available, Classes and open lab, Consisting of 26 computers, the Café is open to community members wishing to train for the workplace, search for employment, attain a GED, and use the Internet. Youth are also encouraged to use the computer center for educational games and the Internet, preparing them for success in school. The primary impact is in the development of relationships with the children, youth, and families in the community through computer usage.
Parkview Apartments Opportunity Center (450 residents)	1201 12th Ave N #106 (612) 377-4050	Minneapolis	Varies, call for details	Offers a variety of different programming for residents HUD lab- Only for residents
Patchwork Quilt	2100 Emerson Ave, 612-270-0923	Minneapolis	Mon-Fri 10-4	BTOP funded lab
People Serving People	614 3rd Street South, Minneapolis, MN 612-332-4500	Minneapolis	Normally 8 am- 8pm with some breaks in between, 8-2 is staffed, afterwards is staffed only by volunteers	People Serving Peopl has a computer lab that is open to shelter residents and past shelter residents, 12 computers are available, Assistance available

Phillips Community Television/ Intermedia Arts	734 E Lake St, Suite 212 612- 821-3938	Minneapolis	Not a public lab, call for hours	Teens write, direct and produce their own short films in a free after school program run by them.
Phyllis Wheatley Community Center	1301 10th Ave N, 612-374-4342	Minneapolis	Mon-Fri 8:30-5	BTOP funded lab
Pierre Bottineau Library	55 Broadway St. NE 952-847-2850	Minneapolis	Mon Closed, Tues, Thurs12-8, Wed, Fri, Sat 10-6, Sun Closed	Minneapolis Public Library
Pillsbury House - Pillsbury United Communities	3501 Chicago Ave S 612- 824-0708	Minneapolis	Call for hours	Printing is available
Pillsbury United Communities Brian Coyle Center	420 15th Avenue S. 612-338-5282	Minneapolis	Call for schedule	Somali and Oromo Speakers available as well as job search assistance and computer classes, free meal available
Pillsbury United Communities- Oak Park Neighborhood Center	1701 Oak Park Ave N 612- 377-7000	Minneapolis	Monday- Thursday 9:30- 4:00, Fri 10-2	Lab subject to closure for events and workshops, call ahead of time
Pillsbury United Communities- Waite House Neighborhood Center	2529 13th Avenue South, 612- 721-1681	Minneapolis	Mon-Thurs 10-2	Help available in Spanish and one-on- one help available, free meal available
Plymouth Christian Youth Coalition	2210 Oliver Ave N 612- 522-6501	Minneapolis	Every other Mon & Sat 1-4,	Free printing for minimal pages
Powderhorn Recreation Center	3400 15th Ave S 612 370-4960	Minneapolis	Monday-Friday1-9 pm	All ages. Powderhorn Park maintains Internet access and a variety of programs for users to access in the computer lab. Adults can job search, write a resume, or check their facebook status. While kids can enjoy an abundance of educational games or internet sites. Wi Fi is also available inside the park building so simply bring your laptop inside for internet access. Check with front desk staff for computer program inquiries and internet filtering questions. Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center

Project for Pride in Living	4046 Lyndale Ave N, 612-455-5100	Minneapolis	N/A, only for residents	Situated in a transitional housing site- only for residents, Mobile laptop lab for three buildings, BTOP funded
Project for Pride in Living (PPL) - Community Access Lab	1925 Chicago Ave S 612-455-5306	Minneapolis	8:30-4:30	Open lab for education and job search purposes
Rice Street Library	1011 Rice St. 651-558-2223	St. Paul	Mon, Wed 12-8, Tues 10-8, Thurs-Sat 10-5:30, Sun 1-5	St. Paul Public Library
Riverside Plaza (845 residents)	1515 South Fourth Street, Box 2009 612-338-4192	Minneapolis	Varies, call for details	Very large computer lab with 31 Pentium IV computers, HUD lab
Riverview Library	1 East George 651-292-6626	St. Paul	Mon, Wed 12-8, Tues 10-5:30, Thurs-Friday 10-5:30, Sat 11-5:30 Sun Closed	St. Paul Public Library
Rondo Community Outreach Library	461 N. Dale Street 651-266-7400	St. Paul	Mon-Thurs 10-9, Fri- Sat 10-5:30, Sun 1-5	St. Paul Public Library, Job Club/Classes available during certain hours
Roosevelt Library	4026 28th Avenue South, 952-847- 2700	Minneapolis	Tues & Thurs 12-8, Wed & Sat 10-6, Mon, Fri, Sun Closed	Minneapolis Public Library
Sabathani Community Computer Lab /HIRED	310 East 38th Street #200, 612-827-5981	Minneapolis	Public hours Mon-Fri 10:30-2, 5-7	Computer classes available as well, BTOP funded lab
Saint Anthony Park Library	2245 Como Ave. 651-642-0411	St. Paul	Mon, Wed 12-8, Tues 10-8, Thurs-Sat 10-5:30, Sun Closed	St. Paul Public Library
Seward Towers East (455 residents)	2910 East Franklin Avenue 612-339- 1711	Minneapolis	Varies, call for details	New computer lab with 10 workstations, all with high speed internet.
Seward Towers West (440 residents)	2515 South Ninth Street, #202 612-333- 7472	Minneapolis	Varies, call for details	New computer lab with 10 workstations, all with high speed internet. HUD lab- Only for residents

Sibley Rec Center at Sibley Park	1900 40th St. E 612 370-4954	Minneapolis	4 to 8pm	Youth 18 and under, "This is open lab time for kids to do homework, search the Internet or play games with friends at the park. Staff will be available to help with questions, assist kids on projects, and monitor use of the computer lab. Filters have been put in place for appropriate websites only." Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Center
Skyline Towers (900 residents)	1247 Saint Anthony Ave. 651- 999-7500	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	Center is inside the High-rise Housing development, so very easy access to residents. The computer lab is very large. Lots of different programs operate ranging from ESL and job search assistance to after school programs. HUD lab- Only for residents
Southeast Asian Refugee Community Home (SEARCH)	1113 E Franklin Ave, Suite 212 612-673-9388	Minneapolis	Open lab from 8:30-5.	Software: Visual Basic, 5 ESL programs, AutoCAD, MS Office Suite, Internet browser. Classes: Computer skills basic, intermediate, advanced; above software, more. May have A++ in the future. Open lab from 8:30-5. All is open to public.
Southeast Library	1222 4th Street SE Minneapolis, MN 952-847-2725	Minneapolis	Tues & Thurs 12-8, Sat 10-6	Minneapolis Public Library
SPNN - Saint Paul Neighborhood Network	375 Jackson St, Suite 250 651-298-8903	St. Paul	M-T, Th-F 12-10pm; W 6-10pm; Sat 9:30am-5:30pm; Sun 12-5:30pm	Youth Media Center. Video equipment is also available to be used by the public who complete an orientation class.
St. Anne's Place	2634 Russell Avenue North 612-521-2128	Minneapolis	Hours Vary	St. Anne's Place has short-term housing for up to sixteen homeless women and their children. Open to shelter residents, 10 computers available

St. Christopher Place (Catholic Charities)	286 Marshal Ave 651-647-2370	St. Paul	Private, Call for hours	Permanent housing with supportive services to 70 single men and women. Employment and education referrals
St. Paul Residence (Catholic Charities)	902 Hersey Street 651-647-2320	St. Paul	Private, Call for hours	Permanent, affordable, supportive housing in St. Paul, MN for 60 single adults who have experienced long-term homelessness
St. Stephens Shelter	2211 Clinton Ave, 612- 874-0311	Minneapolis	8:30-4 M-F	8 new computers, 2 older ones, fast internet, in a new room, Not a drop in lab, only for people in their programs
Sumner Library	611 Van White Memorial Blvd, 952-847-2875	Minneapolis	Mon Closed, Tues, Thurs12-8, Wed, Fri, Sat 10-6, Sun Closed	Minneapolis Public Library
Sun Ray Library	2105 Wilson Ave. 651-501-6300	St. Paul	Mon-Thurs 10-9, Fri-Sat10-5:30, Sun 1-5	St. Paul Public Library
The Office for Business & Community Economic Development	2001 Plymouth Ave N 612-624-3478	Minneapolis	N/A	Computer lab used for classes and non profit training, not a walk in lab
The Salvation Army-Harbor Lights	1010 Currie Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 612-659-0705	Minneapolis	M,W, F 12-4 (computer center is on one of upper floors, many residents are not in during those times)	On one of the upper floors, Harbor Lights has a computer lab. I was given the estimate that there are 12-15 computer labs up there, not many people who stay there seem to know about this. You need to be staying on one of the upper floors to access
Torre De San Miguel (480 residents)	58 Wood Street 651-224-5839	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	Center is centrally located in housing development with 6 internet-connected computers in computer lab. HUD lab-Only for residents
Tubman's Chrysalis Center	4432 Chicago Ave #1, 612- 871-0118 ↑	Minneapolis	Not available yet	Clients only, Just starting one up, just got \$10,000 grant by Digital Inclusion Fund

Twin Cities RISE	800 Washington Ave N, Suite 203 612- 338-0295	Minneapolis	Call for schedule	Twin Cities RISE! is a training and skill development program. Our curriculum is based on input from customer companies and the expertise of adult education and training professionals. The skill development program carries the "weight" of our mission: preparing people for fulltime employment with the potential for job improvement and lifelong career advancement. It includes classroom training, one-on-one coaching, outside training and supportive services as needed.
Union Gospel Learning Center Learning Lab for Men	435 University Avenue East 651-228-1800	St. Paul	9:30-12, 1-5	Have to be associated with one of Union gospel Mission's services, Around 10 computers available
Union Gospel Learning Center Learning Lab for Women	109 9th Street East 651-228-1800	St. Paul	9:30-12, 1-5	Have to be associated with one of Union gospel mission's services, Around 11 computers available
Urban Hope Ministries	2500 W Broadway Ave 612-529-8319	Minneapolis	Call for details	
Urban League- Gateway to Opportunity Resource Center	2100 Plymouth Ave 612-302-3100	Minneapolis	Call for schedule	Free computer lab with free printing
Urban Ventures Family Center	3024 5th Ave S 612- 545-9851	Minneapolis	M + W 4:30-6, Tuesday and Thurs 10:30-12	Has an internet basics computer class M + W 4:30-6, Tuesday and Thurs 10:30-12
Urban Ventures Leadership Foundation	3024 4th Ave S 612- 824-6145	Minneapolis	No	The Learning Lab is an after-school program for middle and high school students. Preparation for GED is available. Call for summer hours and schedule. Also adult classes on basic computer skills and computers for small business.

Waite Park Recreation Center	1810 34th Ave. NE 612 370-4959	Minneapolis	Monday-Thursday 6-8 pm	All ages, "Open computer time at Waite Park Recreation Center. Email and internet available. No printing. Please sign in at the front desk each time." Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Washburn Library	5244 South Lyndale Ave. Minneapolis, MN 952-847-8375	Minneapolis	Mon Closed, Tues, Thurs 12-8, Wed, Fri, Sat 10-6, Sun Closed	Minneapolis Public Library
Webber Community Center	4400 Dupont Ave. N 612 370-4916	Minneapolis	Monday through Friday 2-5pm & 6:30-8:30pm.	All ages, though seems to be more geared to youth. "Enjoy our computer lab at Webber Community Center. We have 7 work stations to use. Your child can play games or use our programs to finish up their homework." Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Webber Park Library	4310 Webber Parkway, 952-847-2750	Minneapolis	Tues & Thurs 12-8, Sat 10-6	Minneapolis Public Library
West Seventh Library	265 Oneida St. 651-298-5516	St. Paul	Mon & Thurs 12:30-8, Tues 11:30-5:30, Wed 10-5:30, Fri 10-5:30	St. Paul Public Library
Westminster Place Apartments (183 residents)	1374 Westminster St. Suite 102 651-772-3123	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	Center has just been rehabbed and allows for additional resources for expanded programs; New computers and computer desks-- no longer hauled out when needed. HUD lab- Only for residents

Whittier Recreation Center at Whittier Park	425 26th St. W 612 370-4966	Minneapolis	Monday-Thursday 4 to 5:30pm	Youth open lab, but also has classes geared to adults, call for details. No open lab for adults. "Enhance your typing skills while learning interesting new things by surfing the internet. Our computer lab is open to all youth who can profit from computer access as an additional homework tool." Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Wilder Computer Lab	Wilder Foundation Room 451 Lexington Parkway North 651-280-2375	St.Paul	Open Lab on Mondays 8:30 - 12:30	Open lab, no restrictions, help available, Computer classes also available
Wilder Foundation Mobile Computer Lab	N/A	St. Paul	Call for more details	Frequents Wilder Foundation's Housing Sites
Windom Recreation Center at Windom Park	2251 Hayes St. NE 612 370-4905	Minneapolis	Mon., Wed., Thurs. 1:30-8pm Tue. and Fri 1:30-9pm Sat. 9:30am-3pm	All ages. "Stop in our computer lab for fun, interactive games and educational software. Learn everything from basic keyboarding to layout and design. Stop in for help with your papers, design your own pictures and artwork, or just simply surf the net. We have everything you need. In addition, we have wonderful learning tools for youth to make the computer experience fun and educational." Minneapolis Park and Recreation Center
Workforce Center- South Minneapolis	777 E Lake Street 612 821-4000	Minneapolis	8-4:30 Mon-Fri	Only for those looking for a job, have computer classes and a class on finding work for ex-offenders, about thirty computers available
Workforce Center-North Minneapolis	1200 Plymouth Ave N 612-520-3500	Minneapolis	8-4:30 Mon-Fri	Only for those looking for a job, also offer computer classes

Workforce Center-St. Paul	540 Fairview Avenue N # 100 651-642-0363	St. Paul	8-4:30 Mon-Fri	Computer use is only for those looking for a job, have computer classes as well
YouthLink Drop In Center	41 North 12th Street 612-252-1200	Minneapolis	Normally open 3-8 Mon-Fri	Drop in center and computer lab for youth
YWCA	375 Selby Ave, 651- 222-3741	St. Paul	N/A only for members	Access is only granted to YWCA members, BTOP funded
YMCA-After School Success Center (North)	1711 West Broadway Ave 612-588-9484	Minneapolis	2-7:30 M-F	Only open to youth with a basic YMCA membership

Appendix E

Shelter and Transitional Housing Computer Access

Note: All information is based off of data collected Fall/Winter 2010 through phone verifications, website information, and information released by agencies. Information is only as accurate as the information given. All efforts have been made to ensure accuracy, but please be aware that times and program details in CTCs change often. Please note that by and large these are NOT public computer labs.

Name	Address/Phone	City	Hours	Notes
Ascension Place	1803 Bryant Avenue North 612- 588-0861	Minneapolis	Limited hours, individuals sign up for time slots	Ascension place houses thirty-two women suffering from mental illness and/or chemical dependency, Open to shelter residents, one computer available, Limited Hours, women sign up for time slots
Cathedral Hill Homes(150 residents)	280 Dayton Ave 651-290-6243	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	Residents were very involved in the development of the lab, job search help available and other programming, HUD lab
Dorothy Day (Catholic Charities)	183 Old 6th Street West, 651-293-1919	St. Paul	M-F (9:30-11:30 2-4)	Not heavily advertised, new computers, many people who go to Dorothy Day do not know about it. It will be transitioning to a more employment focused lab with a recent grant that they received. When I visited it was only available to job searchers in the afternoon, now might be only job focused all the time. Someone is available to help
Exodus Residence (Catholic Charities)	819 2nd Avenue S.612-204-8330	Minneapolis	Private, Call for hours	Transitional Housing, Computer training sessions available
Family Place (Catholic Charities)	244 10th St E, 651-225-9354	St. Paul		Family Place is day center for families, they have the capacity to serve about 40 families at a given time

House of Charity's Computer Learning Center	510 8th St. S. 612-594-2000	Minneapolis	M-F 10-10, Sat 12-10	4 computers available , House of Charity is a multi-service program designed to minimize the root effects of poverty through-a soup kitchen, temporary and transitional housing, halfway house, workforce development and computer lab. Lab is only open to resident clients, recently moved to this new location
Liberty Plaza Resource Center (465 residents)	290 Arundel Street 651-224-5303	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	Offers a variety of different programming for residents, have 12 Intel P4 PCs, HUD lab- Only for residents, Liberty Plaza Resource Center houses multiple levels of programming for children and adults. On site, there are two computer labs accessible from 9AM to 6PM daily. The small computer lab houses 4 computers and the larger lab houses 8 computers. Persons may use the lab for job search, research, homework, and computer learning, HUD computer lab
Listening House	215 9th St W 651-227-5911	St. Paul	Available for use during Listening House open hours	4 older computers (not connected to internet, only for games, unclear how many actually work)
Little Earth Community Technology Center (600 residents)	2438 18th Avenue South 612-455-2810	Minneapolis	Varies, call for details	Offers a variety of different programming for Native American Community, HUD lab-
Mary Hall (Catholic Charities)	215 Old 6th Street West, 651-227-2637	St. Paul	Open 8 am to 10 pm for residents, men's shelter residents can use it for an hour in the evening for job/school purposes	10 Computers available. For residents and men's shelter, Assistance available
Mary's Place	401 North 7th Street 612-338-4855	Minneapolis	Open 6 am-9, sometimes have help available for housing and job searches	5 computers, for residents

McDonough Community Center	1544 Timberlake Rd 651-298-5231	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	HUD lab
Mount Airy Community Center	91 Arch Street E 651-228-3192	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	HUD lab
Mount Carmel Manor (65 residents)	1560 Bellows St. 651-451-0030	St. Paul	24/7 access for all residents	Educational programs for adults Technology literacy (e.g., Internet training, how to use basic software, how computers work): basic computer skills, intermediate computer skills, HUD lab
Opportunity Center (Catholic Charities)- Formally Branch III	740 17th Street East 612-204-8300	Minneapolis	8 AM- 2PM M-F	8 computers, open 8-2, mostly for job purposes, but if not crowded, they'll let people use them for other purposes, have representatives from goodwill Easter seals, and 3 AmeriCorp members to help people out
Our Saviors Community Services- English Learning Center	2315 Chicago Avenue South, 612-871-5900	Minneapolis	Call for hours and to make sure they still have a job club/restrictions	Helps to empower immigrant and refugee adults and their families towards self-determination. Our students study English, math, computers, and prepare for citizenship exams. Also have a job club for housing residents in Our Savior's Housing.
Parkview Apartments Opportunity Center (450 residents)	1201 12th Ave N #106 612-377-4050	Minneapolis	Varies, call for details	Offers a variety of different programming for residents HUD lab- Only for residents
People Serving People	614 3rd Street South, Minneapolis, MN 612- 332-4500	Minneapolis	Normally 8 am-8pm with some breaks in between, 8-2 is staffed, afterwards is staffed only by volunteers	People Serving People has a computer lab that is open to shelter residents and past shelter residents, 12 computers are available, Assistance available
Riverside Plaza (845 residents)	1515 South Fourth Street, Box 2009 612-	Minneapolis	Varies, call for details	Very large computer lab with 31 Pentium IV computers, HUD lab
Seward Towers East (455 residents)	2910 East Franklin Avenue 612-339-1711	Minneapolis	Varies, call for details	New computer lab with 10 workstations, all with high speed internet.
Seward Towers West (440 residents)	2515 South Ninth Street, #202 612-333-7472	Minneapolis	Varies, call for details	New computer lab with 10 workstations, all with high speed internet. HUD lab- Only for residents

Skyline Towers (900 residents)	1247 Saint Anthony Ave. 651- 999-7500	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	Center is inside the High-rise Housing development, so very easy access to residents. The computer lab is very large. Lots of different programs operate ranging from ESL and job search assistance to after school programs. HUD lab- Only for residents
St. Anne's Place	2634 Russell Avenue North 612- 521-2128	Minneapolis	Hours Vary	St. Anne's Place has short-term housing for up to sixteen homeless women and their children. Open to shelter residents, 10 computers available
St. Christopher Place (Catholic Charities)	286 Marshal Ave 651-647-2370	St. Paul	Private, Call for hours	Permanent housing with supportive services to 70 single men and women. Employment and education referrals
St. Paul Residence (Catholic Charities)	902 Hersey Street 651-647-2320	St. Paul	Private, Call for hours	Permanent, affordable, supportive housing in St. Paul, MN for 60 single adults who have experienced long-term homelessness
St. Stephens Shelter	2211 Clinton Ave, 612- 874-0311	Minneapolis	8:30-4 M-F	8 new computers, 2 older ones, fast internet, in a new room, Not a drop in lab, only for people in their programs
The Salvation Army-Harbor Lights	1010 Currie Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 612-659-0705	Minneapolis	M,W, F 12-4 (computer center is on one of upper floors, many residents are not in during those times)	On one of the upper floors, Harbor Lights has a computer lab. I was given the estimate that there are 12-15 computers up there, not many people who stay there seem to know about this. You need to be staying on one of the upper floors to access
Torre De San Miguel (480 residents)	58 Wood Street 651-224-5839	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	Center is centrally located in housing development with 6 internet-connected computers in computer lab. HUD lab- Only for residents
Tubman's Chrysalis Center	4432 Chicago Ave #1, 612- 871-0118	Minneapolis	Not available yet	Clients only, Just starting one up, just got \$10,000 grant by Digital Inclusion Fund
Union Gospel Learning Center Learning Lab for Men	435 University Avenue East 651-228-1800	St. Paul	9:30-12, 1-5	Have to be associated with one of Union gospel Mission's services, Around 10 computers available

Union Gospel Learning Center Learning Lab for Women	109 9th Street East 651-228-1800	St. Paul	9:30-12, 1-5	Have to be associated with one of Union gospel mission's services, Around 11 computers available
Westminster Place Apartments (183 residents)	1374 Westminster St. Suite 102 651-772-3123	St. Paul	Varies, call for details	Center has just been rehabbed and allows for additional resources for expanded programs; New computers and computer desks-- no longer hauled out when needed. HUD lab- Only for residents
YouthLink Drop In Center	41 North 12th St. 612-252-1200	Minneapolis	Normally open 3-8 Mon-Fri	Drop in center and computer lab for youth

Works Cited Inventory

Note: All information is based off of data collected Fall/Winter 2010 through phone verifications, website information, and information released by agencies. Information is only as accurate as the information given. All efforts have been made to ensure accuracy, but as times in CTCs change often, before arriving please verify that the center will be open when you plan to visit.

This particular list of community technology centers does not include schools or community education sites, but some do.

“Catholic Charities Services.” Retrieved from: <http://www.cctwincities.org/services.aspx>

“Minneapolis Parks and Recreation activity rosters, Winter-Spring 2011.
Retrieved from: <http://www.minneapolisparks.org/home.asp>

“Neighborhood Network Centers.” (HUD Computer Labs). Retrieved from:
<http://lnshhq05w.hud.gov/NN/contacts.nsf/centersearch?OpenForm>

Phone Verifications, St. Paul Parks and Recreation. Winter 2011.

Phone Verifications and in Person Visits, Area Shelters, Fall-Winter 2010.

Phone Verifications, Area Non-Profits, Fall-Winter 2010.

“Public Computer Center Hours.” *Broadband Access Project, Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center, University of Minnesota.* October, 27, 2010.

“PHA and HUD Programs and Services, July 2009.” *St. Paul Public Housing Agency.*
Retrieved from: http://www.stpaulpha.org/forms/PHA_Programs.pdf

“Technology Literacy Collaborative Community Technology List.” Retrieved from: <http://tlc-mn.org/ctc>. (Phone verifications were performed on many of the centers on this list in Fall-Winter 2010).

Appendix F

Gaps in Service for St. Paul homeless population. Quotes from homeless individuals and advocates.

“Weekends are the worst in the winter, especially in the morning, you get let out at Dorothy day at 6, and nothing is open until 9”
- Open Access Connections Outreach worker

“Tuesdays are also bad. Dorothy Day is closed from 12:45-4:30 on Tuesdays. Weekdays are a little better, because Dorothy Day lets out at 6, but then there’s breakfast at Salvation Army at 7:30.”- Homeless individual surveyed

“Dorothy day check out at 6, need to leave property by 6:30 at the absolute latest have nowhere to go. Ride buses if you’re lucky to have a bus pass, otherwise just go to bus shelters or skyways if you can get in.”-Homeless individual surveyed

“On the weekends, you check out of Dorothy Day at 6, and nothing is open until 9. Listening house is open weekends in the cold weather months from 5:30-8:30 pm.”
- Homeless individual surveyed