

Communities Connect Network-- *Communicating CTC Impact to the Legislature*

CTCNet Conference
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Agenda

- What's the problem?
- What is Communities Connect Network?
- The strategy
- The testimony
- Follow-up
- The results
- Tips
- Next steps

What's the Problem?

- We know CTC work makes a difference
- Many systemic problems come from lack of sustainable funding
- Policymakers & funders often have low awareness of CTC needs and impact
- CTC are often parts of larger programs— leads to identity confusion
- Many CTC staff and volunteers don't have time, language, or skills for advocacy



Getting a Voice

- Steps to a solution
 - Identify & organize the CTC “community”
 - Measure the impact of the work
 - Figure out how to make the case for funding
 - Provide policy solutions
 - Draw other key stakeholders into the conversation

What is Communities Connect Network?

Communities Connect Network

- What is Communities Connect Network?
 - A statewide coalition of public and private organizations working to ensure that Washington state is a leader in “digital inclusion”
 - Lead partners: City of Seattle Department of Information Technology, the University of Washington Information School, One Economy Corporation, Washington State University Extension Center to Bridge the Digital Divide, Stone Soup, and NPower Seattle
- What does CCN do?
 - Capacity building training for service providers (e.g. evaluation)
 - Conducts research, including CTC mapping
 - Strategic investment advice for public officials and business leaders
 - <http://communitiesconnect.org>

CCN's Core Elements

- Digital Inclusion
 - The goal of equity in information technology access, literacy and meaningful content
- Community technology
 - The strategy, programs and services to help reach digital inclusion

Removing Barriers to Digital Inclusion

- CCN and its members have adopted this framework to help individuals, small businesses and non-profits join the information age
 - *Providing **access** to computers and the internet*
 - Availability, cost, ease of use for connectivity to the Internet, and end-user hardware and software. Also tech support.
 - *Building **literacy** in using computer and internet technologies*
 - Skills required in order to utilize the equipment and Internet effectively for essential services, education, employment, civic engagement and cultural participation.
 - *Making meaningful and useful **content and services** available*
 - Services available for those in need, culturally and educationally appropriate design, marketing and placement appropriate to reach underserved communities, and enabling of content production and distribution by lower capacity residents, businesses and organizations.

The Strategy

Getting Ready

- Creating a database of providers
- Training the providers
- Conducting the research
- Finding the supporters
- Picking the committees
- Setting up briefing sessions & hearings
- Preparing the presentation
- Tracking and follow-up with key supporters

State CT Day

Training, then committee briefings
before the Legislative Session

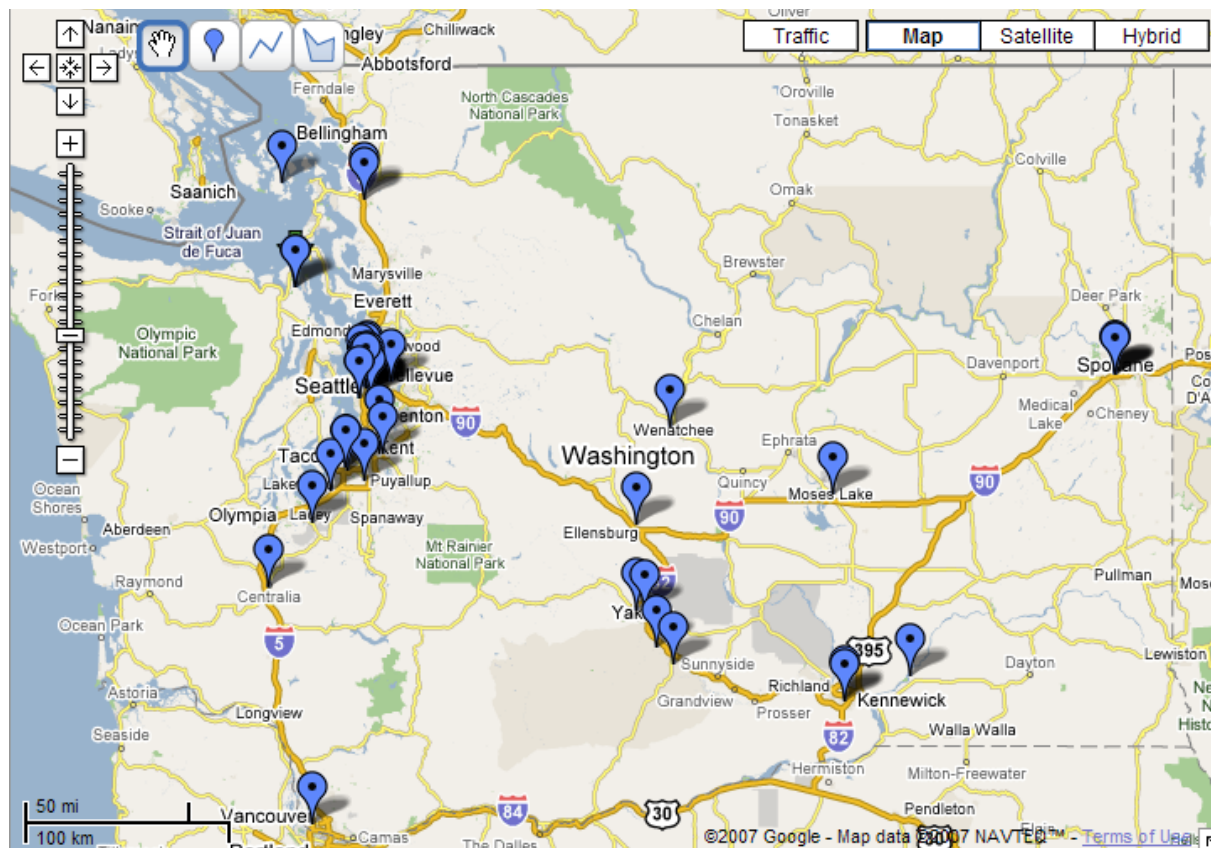
- On site CT provider training:
Stating your case
- Two separate committee
hearings
 - Research presentation
 - Voices from the providers



The Testimony

A Study of CT in Washington State

- In the summer of 2007, UW conducted a phone survey across 211 agencies in the state identified as community technology providers. 47 of these agencies completed the survey, and 7 sites were visited for more in-depth study.
- This was combined with earlier data to provide a snapshot of CT in Washington State
- Findings indicate both the impact that CT is having on communities, as well as barriers being faced



Findings: How Many People Served?

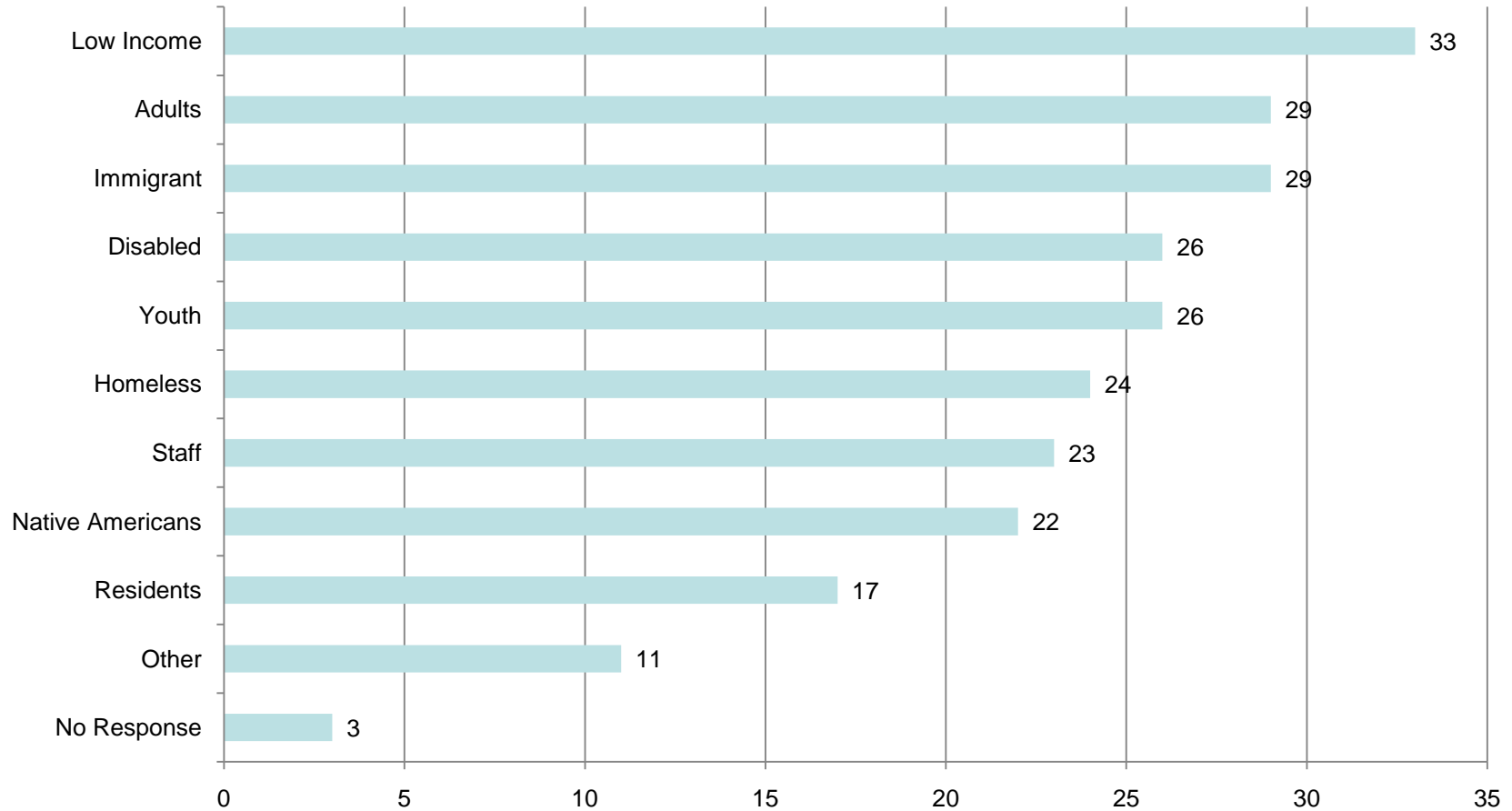
- Based on information from ***about half*** of the known community technology providers in the state— we know that these agencies serve:

99,467 unique users per year

Weekly counts show that ***on average, a user visits 14 times*** during the year

Resulting in an estimated total of
1,392,538 visits per year

User Demographics



Responses from 47 surveyed programs (multiple audiences per site)

About the Users

- **How long have users been coming?**
 - Approximately one third had been coming to the center for one year or less, just over 36% attended for 2 years, and 27% had used the center for 3 or more years.
- **How much time do they spend there?**
 - The majority of users (62%) stated that the average amount of time spent at the center ranged from less than an hour per week up to 6 hours per week, while 24% indicated that they used the center 7 or more hours per week.
- **Are users satisfied with services?**
 - 88% percent of users indicated that they will continue to use the CTCs. Furthermore, the value users find in the centers was reflected in their recommendations to others. Almost 69% of CTC recommendations were directed toward friends or acquaintances, 19% went to family and 13% percent referred to others

Individual Benefits

- **Employment/Economic Benefits**
 - Developed job skills
 - Empowered to obtain additional technical skills
 - Helped gain employment
- **Academic Skills and Literacy**
 - Providing references and/or resumes for college or jobs
 - Academic improvement like raising math scores
 - Preparing users to obtain a GED or go to college
- **Social Inclusion and Personal Growth**
 - Relationship building/friendship
 - Staying out of trouble
 - Developing or expanding interests
 - Tangible skill development (e.g. leadership, public speaking)
 - Providing connections to community leaders
 - Building confidence and elevating expectations

Family Benefits

- **Employment/Economic Benefits**
 - Helping users to get a better paying job
- **Academic Skills and Literacy**
 - Connecting families to technology
 - Ability to help school aged children
- **Social Inclusion and Personal Growth**
 - Improving family relationships
 - Keeping kids safe by checking their online activities

Community Benefits

- **Employment/Economic Benefits**
 - More skilled work force
 - Better educated population
- **Social Inclusion and Personal Growth**
 - Develop future leaders
 - Motivate users to take action in their communities
 - Community building
- **Organizational Capacity Building**
 - Staff skills gained
 - Volunteer opportunities

Barriers

- **Inadequate staffing or instructors**
 - *“not enough staffing. Kids must be supervised in the CTC but there are not enough people to monitor kids and give them computer access. Sometimes she's the only one there and can't supervise them in the CTC, so they can't go down there.”* Delridge Neighborhood Development Association, Seattle
- **Funding issues**
 - *“It is easier to get technology funding than staff funding.”* Reel Grrls, Seattle
 - *“The organization currently lacks the requisite money to replace their aging desktop and laptop computers.”* Washington CASH, Seattle
- **Insufficient space, computers or technologies**
 - *“Once I wanted to study the computers, but there wasn't room”* Yesler Terrace, Seattle
 - *“It's hard to run an Internet business with no bandwidth “* Stone Soup, Republic

Voices from the Field

- In the process of doing our research, we collected many stories from the sites we visited and surveyed that show the direct impact community technology is making in Washington State
- Rather than giving those to you second hand, we have here with us today people who are making all this possible
- They will give you a first hand picture of the impact, barriers and needs of community technology providers



Reel Grrls office and users' work area (small table)

The community technology providers of Washington State



Follow-up



- Additional meetings
- Close tracking of legislation
- Provider meetings with legislators
- Follow-up with staff & close contact with key legislators: Our Champions
- Work with other lobbyists and supporters
- Activate CT community at key times:
 - IT MATTERS!
- Understand motivation and opposition

The Results

Governor Gregoire Signs SSB 6438 Into Law



Key Sections- CT Inclusion in Broadband Planning

1 (2) Therefore, in order to begin advancing the state towards
2 further growth and development of high-speed internet in the state, and
3 to ensure a better quality of life for all state residents, it is the
4 legislature's intent to conduct a statewide needs assessment of
5 broadband internet resources through an open dialogue with all
6 interested parties, including providers, unions, businesses, community
7 organizations, local governments, and state agencies. The legislature
8 intends to use this needs assessment in guiding future plans on how to
9 ensure that every resident in Washington state may gain access to
10 high-speed internet services and, as part of this effort, to address
11 digital literacy and technology training needs of low-income and
12 technology underserved residents of the state through state support of
13 community technology programs.

Key Sections- Mapping CT

28 NEW SECTION. Sec. 5. A new section is added to chapter 43.105 RCW
29 to read as follows:

30 (1) By January 1, 2009, the department, in consultation with
31 Washington State University, shall identify and make publicly available
32 a web directory of public facilities that provide community technology
33 programs throughout the state.

34 (2) For the purposes of this section, "community technology
35 program" has the same meaning as in section 7 of this act.

Key Sections- Establishing CT Funding

1 NEW SECTION. Sec. 6. The community technology opportunity program
2 is created to support the efforts of community technology programs
3 throughout the state. The community technology opportunity program
4 must be administered by the Washington State University extension, in
5 consultation with the department of information services. The
6 Washington State University extension may contract for services in
7 order to carry out the extension's obligations under this section.

8 (1) In implementing the community technology opportunity program
9 the administrator must, to the extent funds are appropriated for this
10 purpose:

11 (a) Provide organizational and capacity building support to
12 community technology programs throughout the state, and identify and
13 facilitate the availability of other public and private sources of
14 funds to enhance the purposes of the program and the work of community
15 technology programs. No more than fifteen percent of funds received by
16 the administrator for the program may be expended on these functions;

17 (b) Establish a competitive grant program and provide grants to
18 community technology programs to provide training and skill-building
19 opportunities; access to hardware and software; internet connectivity;
20 assistance in the adoption of information and communication
21 technologies in low-income and underserved areas of the state; and
22 development of locally relevant content and delivery of vital services
23 through technology.

Key Sections- Defining CT

18 (2) "Community technology program" means a program, including a
19 digital inclusion program, engaged in diffusing information and
20 communications technology in local communities, particularly in
21 underserved areas. These programs may include, but are not limited to,
22 programs that provide education and skill-building opportunities,
23 hardware and software, internet connectivity, and development of
24 locally relevant content and delivery of vital services through
25 technology.

Key Sections- Allocating Funding

26 NEW SECTION. Sec. 8. The Washington community technology
27 opportunity account is established in the state treasury. Donated
28 funds from private and public sources may be deposited into the
29 account. Expenditures from the account may be used only for the
30 operation of the community technology opportunity program as provided
31 in section 6 of this act. Only the administrator or the
32 administrator's designee may authorize expenditures from the account.

- \$500,000 in FY 08-09 for CT Programs!!!
...for both grants and capacity building

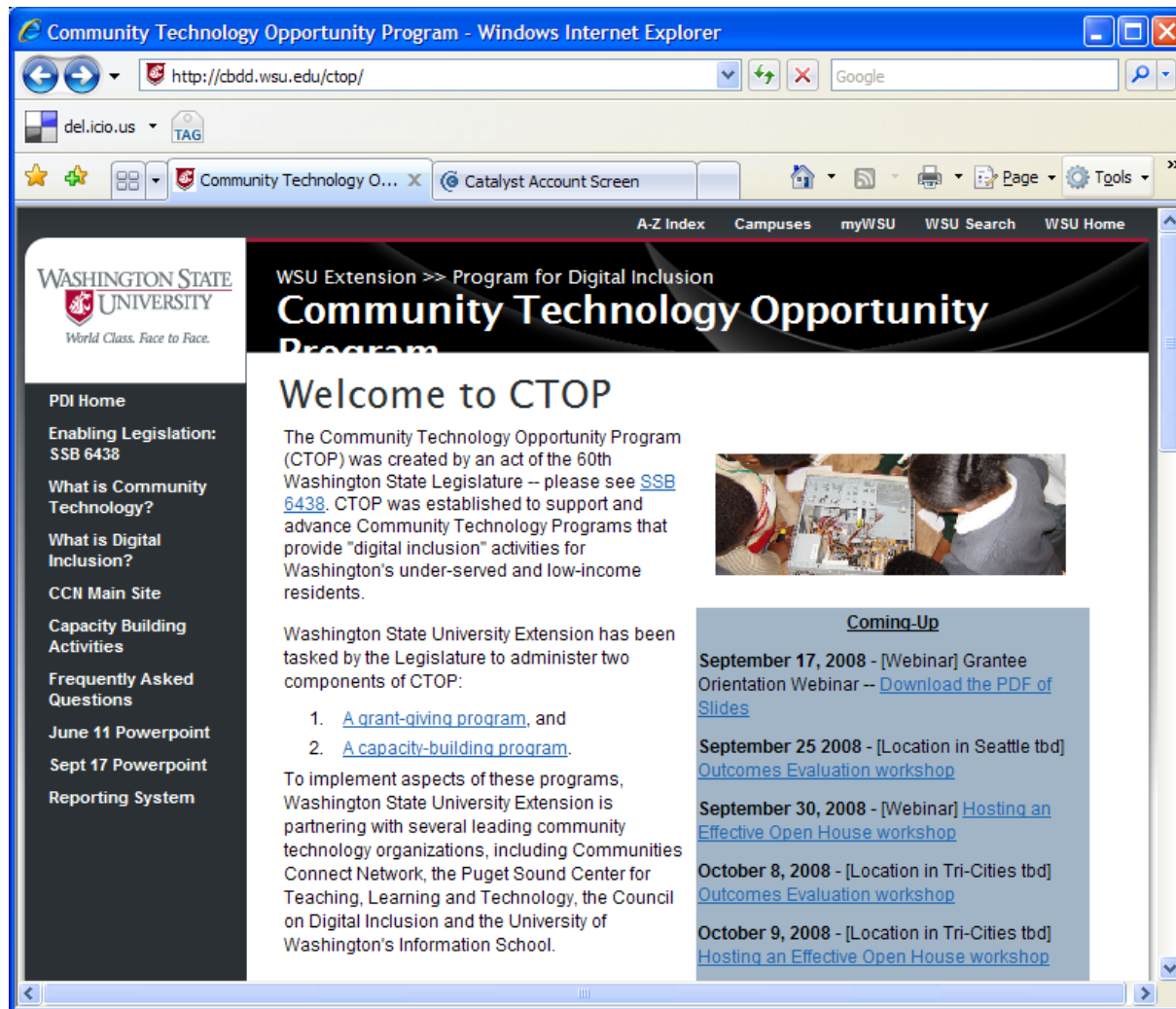
What Success Looks Like



Implementing the Legislation

Keeping the CT Community Active

Community Technology Opportunity Program

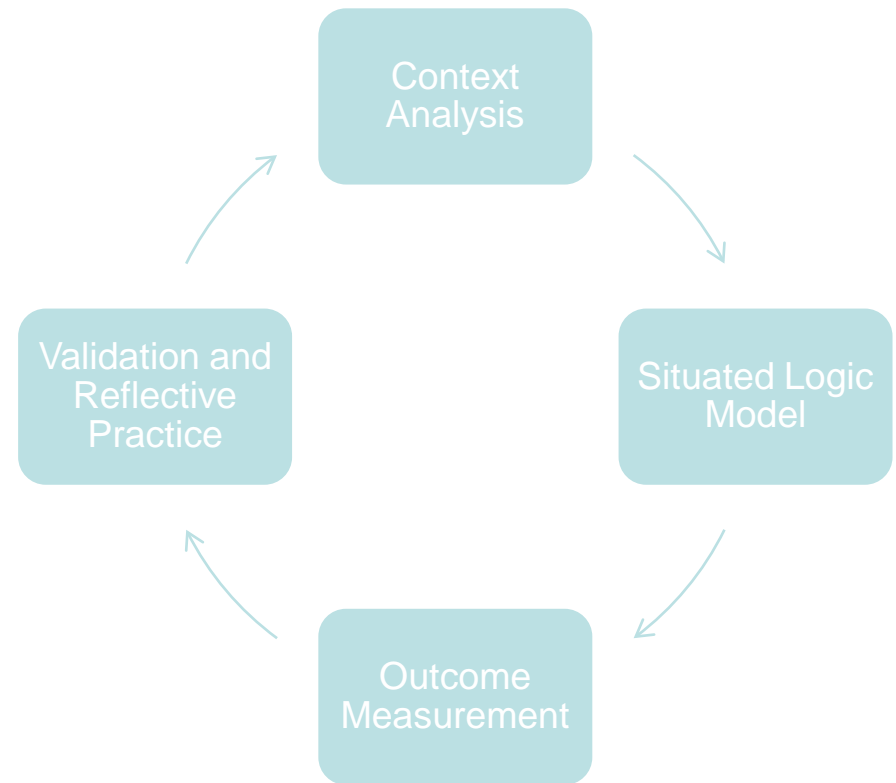


Grant-Giving Program

- \$350,000 available
- For organizations that provide hands-on technology access and training in serving residents of Washington state.
 - 25% match required
 - First grants to be done by June 15, 2009.
 - Administered by Washington State University Extension.
- 35 applications requesting \$1.296 million
 - Used review panel comprised of private sector professionals engaged in digital inclusion activities in Washington state
- 10 awards made
- Online data gathering

Community Technology Impact Analysis Framework

- Used to frame the CTOP program goals
- Six domains were found to be important
 - Employment/economic
 - Academic skills and literacy
 - Social inclusion and personal growth
 - Independence
 - Access to information and resources
 - Communication
- Learn more in the workshop tomorrow morning: 9-10:30
Demonstrating Impact in Your Community



Capacity-Building Program

- WSU will partner with CCN, UW, NPower Seattle & Puget Sound Center for Teaching, Learning & Technology to deliver a series of capacity-building activities based on a proven strategy. CCN will help CTOP accomplish two high-level objectives:
 - Reach more community technology programs serving Washington's residents.
 - Reach deeper into currently engaged community technology programs with focused training workshops
- To reach more community technology programs serving Washington's residents, CTOP and its partners will:
 - Update content of the 2007-08 trainings
 - Offer Open House workshops (quarterly)
 - Track & Publicize Open House results
 - Develop & Share resources and networking opportunities for community technology programs serving WA residents
- To reach deeper into currently engaged community technology programs, CTOP and its partners will:
 - Develop & Deliver new training content:
 - Fundraising Workshop
 - Outcomes Measurement & Evaluation Workshop
 - Actively recruit more participation from community technology program currently engaged in CCN, with special focus on recruit higher-level leaders as well as clients/beneficiaries of CT programs

And the Work Continues

- Build stronger networks
- Collect robust data on impact of CT programs in Washington State
- Tie into national work on community technology impact
- Build our Digital Inclusion Council
- Next legislative session development

Relation to Broadband

- Deployment & Adoption...
 - where adoption is the area we focus on most...as well as some community-based deployment
 - Low adoption is a large concern of companies...an opportunity for our expertise and CTC-base solutions
- Need to get CT into the policy and discussion...

Thanks

- The leadership team of Communities Connect Network
 - [City of Seattle Department of Information Technology](#)
 - [Npower Seattle](#)
 - [Puget Sound Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology](#)
 - [Stone Soup](#)
 - [University of Washington Information School](#)
 - [Washington State University Extension](#)
- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- The Washington State Legislature
- CCTPG and all those who paved the way before us
- *and most important of all.....*

The community technology providers of Washington State

