Anacostia

FY2016
Annual Report
Empowering Communities Through Technology

CONNECT.DC
Digital Inclusion Initiative • Powered by OCTO

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DC

Table of Contents

Opening Message

Digital technology has changed the way people learn, work, and access information. It can help people do everything from grow their businesses to find affordable housing. The ability to use digital technology is necessary for success in today's world, but unfortunately there are still many residents in the District of Columbia who don't have the access or skills to fully take advantage of the benefits of being online. That's where Connect.DC comes in.

Our goal for FY2016 was to continue demonstrating value to our stakeholders by focusing our energy and resources in three main areas: relevant training programs, affordable technology access, and effective outreach efforts. Connect.DC provided technology training in underserved neighborhoods across the city in FY2016. The training specifically focused on low-income residents, seniors, returning citizens, and entrepreneurs. Connect.DC also established new partnerships with local nonprofits and District government agencies to take programs (e.g., financial literacy) directly to residents using our Mobile Tech Lab. We provided incentives to participants by offering subsidized hardware and/or internet service to residents who successfully completed training. We executed two public awareness campaigns that promoted our free training classes and used direct engagement to keep residents informed about affordable technology offers, new programs, and community events. The focus on communities with the greatest need continued with the second phase of the Connected Communities Initiative in our two digital footprints in Wards 7 and Ward 8. This effort expanded the focus to include a partnership with the DC Housing Authority to increase technology access opportunities for public housing residents.
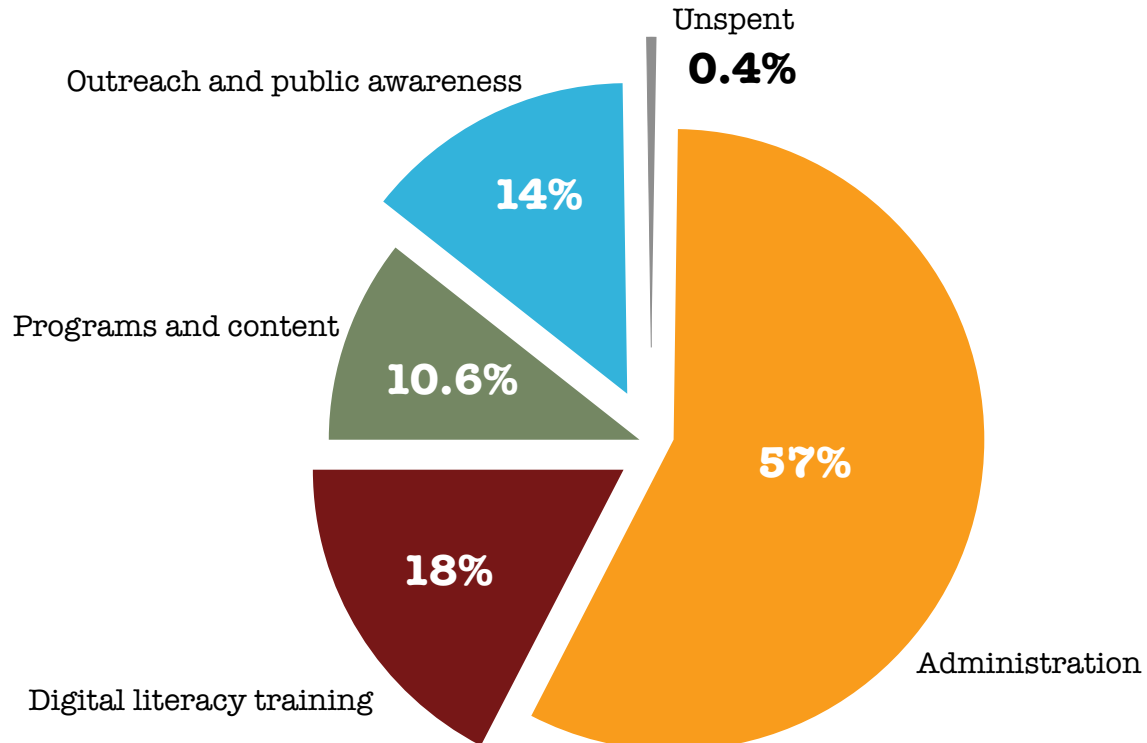
"*In an increasingly digital world it is important to ensure all D.C. residents have access to quality and affordable internet. Access to internet in this day and age is extremely vital to continued long term success and prosperity. Businesses are created, skills are honed and developed and knowledge is acquired via the internet. There is a documented access gap between residents of Ward 7 and the rest of the district. I was pleased to learn the steps Connect.DC is taking to decrease this divide and am encouraged with their strategy to permanently closing this gap. "*

-Richard Parker, Ward 7 Resident

FY2016

Operating Budget - $814,675

Unspent
0.4%

Outreach and public awareness
14%

Programs and content
10.6%

57%

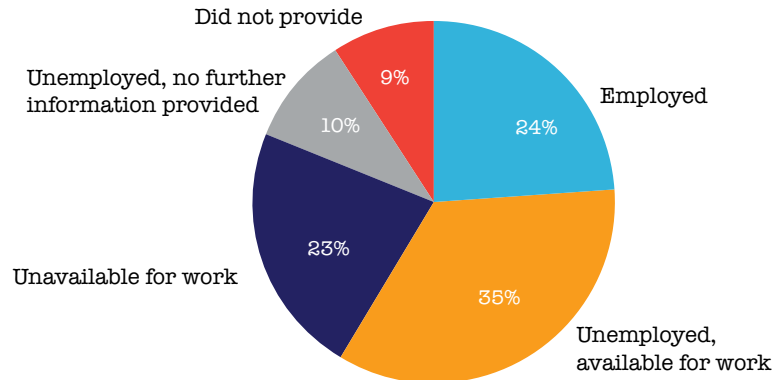Administration

18%

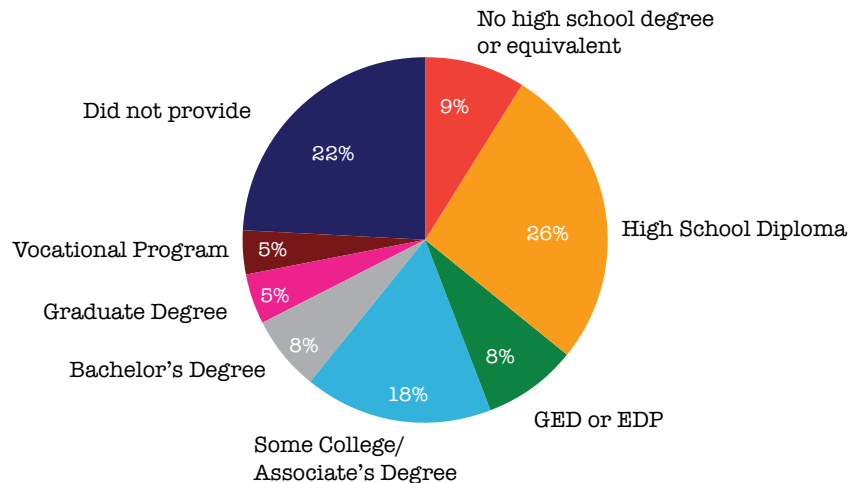Digital literacy training

3

FY2016 in Review

Byte Back

With a mission to provide computer training and career preparation to underserved residents, Byte Back is one of Connect.DC's principal partners in the fight to bridge the District's digital divide.

In FY2016, Connect.DC partnered with Byte Back to train 188 residents. The Personal Computing for Beginners classes covered the basic components of a computer, email use, internet searching, and file and folder management. Byte Back's 12-week Office Track course covered the Microsoft Office suite (MS Word, Excel, Outlook, and PowerPoint) and was ideal for students interested in entry-level administrative positions. Another highlight of Connect.DC's partnership with Byte Back was using the Mobile Tech Lab to bring technology training to three DC Housing Authority communities–Barry Farm, Benning Terrace, and Richardson Dwellings–as part of the dcConnectHome initiative.

5

Employment Status

- Did not provide — 9%
- Unemployed, no further information provided — 10%
- Unavailable for work — 23%
- Employed — 24%
- Unemployed, available for work — 35%

Educational Attainment

- No high school degree or equivalent — 9%
- High School Diploma — 26%
- GED or EDP — 8%
- Some College/ Associate's Degree — 18%
- Bachelor's Degree — 8%
- Graduate Degree — 5%
- Vocational Program — 5%
- Did not provide — 22%

N=133

Participants by Ward

Sex

Male	Female	No Answer
49	81	3

Internet at Home?

Yes	No
50	37

Race/Ethnicity

Black	Latino	Native American	White	Multiracial	No Answer
109	7	2	2	3	12

8
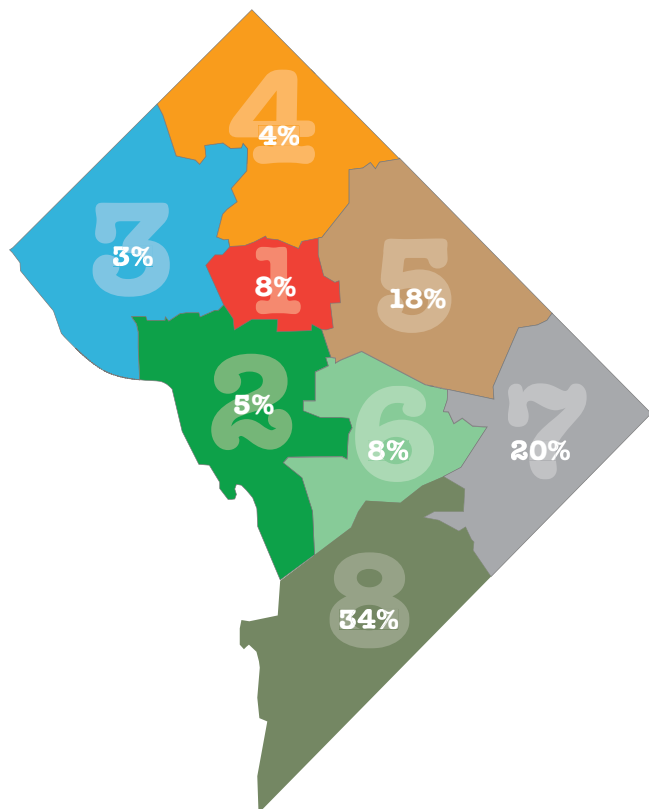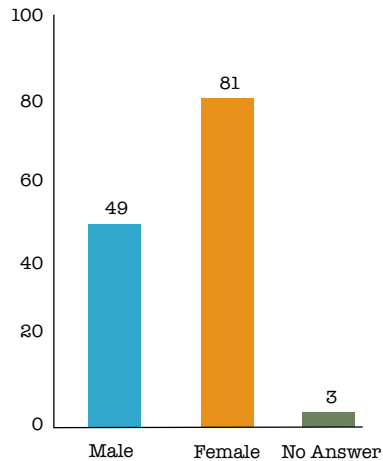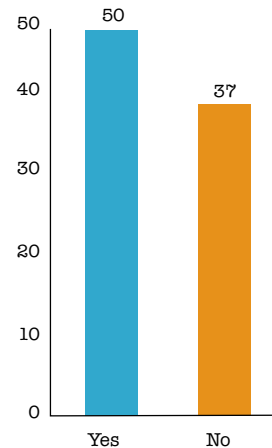
Mobile Tech Lab

The Mobile Tech Lab (MTL) is a 48-foot converted bookmobile equipped with computers and Wi-Fi that allows Connect.DC to bring the power of technology to neighborhoods across the District. The MTL was used in FY2016 to deliver technology training to more than 170 residents. Connect.DC also used it for outreach at more than 45 community events.
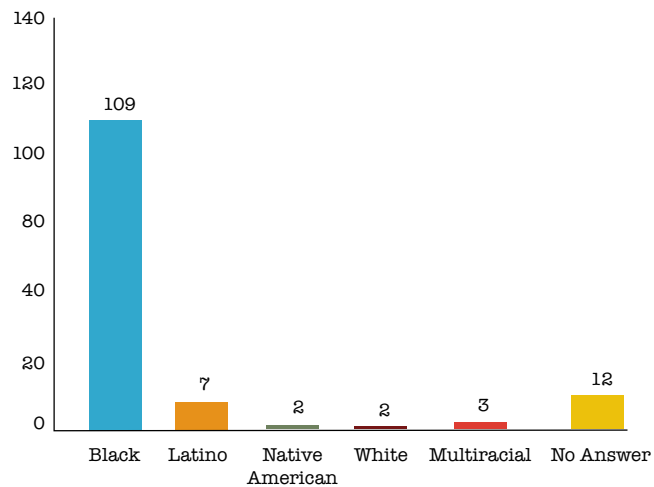
Connect.DC partnered with District government agencies and nonprofit organizations to offer classes to seniors, provide financial literacy, and deliver small business training for DC entrepreneurs. Connect.DC also used the MTL to help families explore school options for their children, enroll teens in the Summer Youth Employment Program, and help residents complete online applications.

MTL Events *

Event partners

Event	# of residentes reached
Byte Back (Registration)	62
DCHR (Employee Learning Week)	20
DCOA (Senior Symposium)	40
MPD (Beat the Streets)	60
My School DC	37
OUC (Smart 911)	75

# of residentes reached

*Featured events

MTL Training

Chart: # of residents trained by Program partners

- Academy of Hope: 10
- Byte Back: 40
- Cyber-Seniors: 40
- EntreDC: 27
- DHS/Capital Area Asset Builders: 3
- LIFT-DC: 37
- Operation Hope: 5
- OSSE: 11

EntreDC

EntreDC is a small business training program offered by Sales & Margin, the Hive 2.0, Emory Beacon of Light, and Industrial Bank for residents in underserved communities.
The program provides entrepreneurs with the tools they need to improve their businesses. Participants in FY2016 received incubator office space, one year of startup support after classroom training, and the promise of generating a living wage from their businesses upon graduation. Sales & Margin utilized the Mobile Tech Lab to deliver its online curriculum to entrepreneurs without online access. In addition, Connect.DC provided laptops to 22 residents who successfully completed the program.

14

Cyber-Seniors

Connect.DC partnered with The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington and Cyber-Seniors to connect teen volunteers with older adults who wanted to learn more about technology and internet access. Cyber-Seniors trained a total of 15 seniors on the MTL, and Connect.DC helped graduating seniors use their newly acquired skills by providing them with new laptops.

My School DC

My School DC operates DC's online school lottery that parents use to enroll their children in public charter schools, DCPS out-of-boundary schools, and selective citywide DCPS high schools. Connect.DC participated in EdFest–a citywide event that brings parents together with schools, District government agencies, and other education stakeholders–and partnered with My School DC to take the MTL to low-income neighborhoods to help parents fill out the online lottery application.

"Connect.DC is working to provide no-nonsense solutions for residents in Southeast DC that not only provide affordable internet access and connect them to the rest of the world, but also to allow residents an opportunity to provide input on the solutions that will be provided. The team did a great job of illustrating how these solutions will positively impact and improve our everyday lives."

- Romell Cummings, Ward 8 Resident

Connected Communities

The Connected Communities Initiative (CCI) was created in 2014 to increase technology access and use in low-income DC neighborhoods. Connect.DC uses CCI to focus on digital footprints (i.e., neighborhood clusters with similar socioeconomic profiles) that have home broadband adoption rates that are significantly lower than the citywide average (76%). The first phase of CCI ended in 2015 with the creation of community tech plans that listed 17 strategies to increase technology access and build a culture of digital excellence. These strategies were implemented throughout the Ward 7 (Benning Ridge/Marshall Heights) and Ward 8 (Barry Farm/Hillsdale/ Historic Anacostia) footprints. Eleven of those strategies have been successfully implemented since that time. The FY2016 goals included new digital literacy classes, completing renovation of the Mobile Tech Lab, launching two public awareness campaigns, and subsidizing hardware and internet service for District residents. Connect.DC reached another CCI milestone by holding two community conversations in existing digital footprints to provide progress updates and receive feedback on ideas to improve the initiative. Connect.DC also held two other meetings in Wards 5 and 6 to talk to residents and community leaders about how they use technology and what, if any, barriers keep them from accessing the internet.

dcConnectHome

President Obama announced ConnectHome–a new initiative to increase broadband access to low-income families in public housing–in July 2015. The District of Columbia was one of 28 municipalities in this pilot program and DC launched its local implementation (dcConnectHome) in November 2015.

OCTO partnered with the DC Housing Authority (DCHA) and the Mayor's Office of Federal and Regional Affairs during the first phase of the initiative to roll out several access and training initiatives in FY2016. Upgrades to DC-Net's infrastructure at 21 DCHA management buildings delivered in-home WiFi to 1,785 households. These upgrades provided broadband access to more than 750 school-age children. In addition, Connect.DC used the MTL to teach computer classes at three different DCHA communities (Barry Farm, Benning Terrace, and Richardson Dwellings) and train 34 residents.
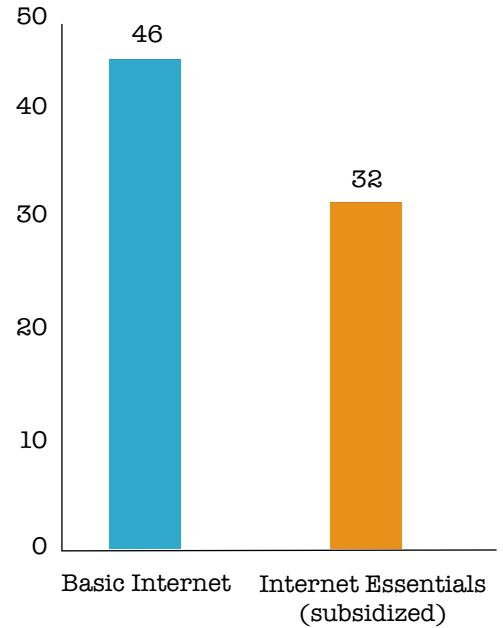
Hardware and Connectivity

The issue of affordability continues to be a leading obstacle for people without home broadband service. Residents who do not have internet service at home are often limited by the functionality of smartphones and the time restrictions on public computers. As a response to this issue, Connect.DC subsidized hardware and connectivity for more than 100 residents in FY2016. To date, more than 70 residents, including seniors and students, received computers after successfully completing training. Connect.DC also provided residents with information on affordable internet service through a partnership with EveryoneOn. Internet Essentials (IE), a Comcast program created specifically for families with school-aged children, is an example of one low-cost broadband service. Connect.DC started an initiative in FY2015 that provided at least six months of free internet to families who enrolled in IE. Over the past fiscal year, 32 families received more than 200 months of free internet service through that effort. One Ward 8 school, Leckie Elementary, even partnered with Connect.DC, EveryoneOn, and Comcast to help parents enroll for IE and provide technology access to students who needed it to complete their homework assignments.

Computers Distributed to Residents

# of devices

Cyber-Seniors	16
EntreDC	22
Judah Project	24
LIFT-DC	9

Program partners
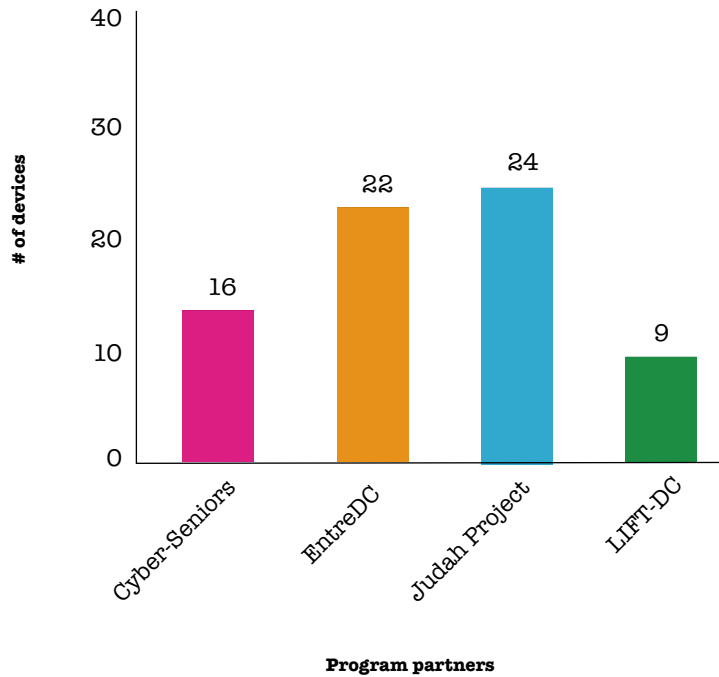
New Internet Subscriptions

|	
Basic Internet	46
Internet Essentials (subsidized)	32

Outreach and Public Awareness

It is impossible to reach residents who are offline and disconnected entirely through digital means, so in FY2015 Connect.DC created an outreach team to engage residents in their neighborhoods and at community events. These outreach efforts helped Connect.DC inform residents about new training classes, events, and affordable internet offers. Connect.DC continued outreach in FY2016 and reached more than 10,500 residents, primarily in Wards 5, 6, 7, and 8. In addition, Connect.DC attended more than 50 outreach events, including the Broccoli City Festival, the DC Office on Aging's Annual Senior Symposium, Truck Touch, and MPD's Beat the Streets community festivals.

Connect.DC also executed two public awareness campaigns in FY2016. Each four-week campaign promoted free technology training for DC residents by featuring stories from actual Byte Back graduates who used their new skills to improve their careers or accomplish personal goals. The campaign ads appeared on Metrobuses and in Metrorail stations around the city. The ads included information about Byte Back training and prompted residents to text Connect.DC's unique shortcode for more details. As a result of these efforts, more than 5,000 new residents were added to the program's text platform.

Residents/Households Reached by Street Team

Ward	Value
Ward 5	4737
Ward 6	1430
Ward 7	1539
Ward 8	2862
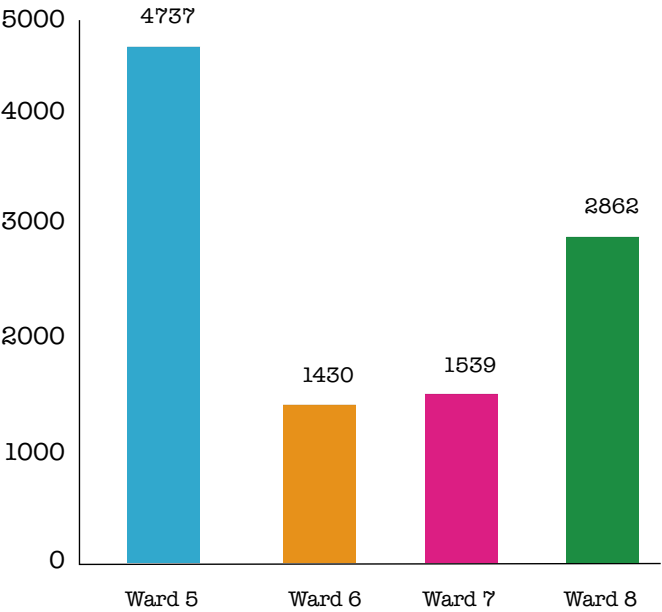
Looking Ahead

Broadband access has made it possible for thousands of District residents to apply for jobs, find affordable housing, access essential services, start businesses, and purchase health insurance. Even though significant progress has been made in addressing technology disparities in the District, much work remains. Planned programs in FY2017 include recruiting digital ambassadors to promote digital inclusion, using the MTL to deliver financial literacy programs, providing computer training in public housing communities, and engaging residents directly in their neighborhoods. Connect.DC will continue to use computer training, affordable connectivity, relevant programs, and public awareness to encourage full digital citizenship for DC residents regardless of income, education, or age.

Partner Acknowledgement

- Academy of Hope
- Boys & Girls Club of Greater Washington (FBR Branch)
- Byte Back
- Capital Area Asset Builders
- CentroNía
- Cyber-Seniors
- DC Department of Human Resources
- DC Office on Aging
- Department of Employment Services
- Department of Human Services
- District of Columbia Housing Authority
- Edgewood/Brookland Family Support Collaborative

- Emory Beacon of Light
- EveryoneOn
- LIFT-DC
- Metropolitan Police Department
- My School DC
- Office of Unified Communications
- Office of the State Superintendent of Education
- Operation Hope
- Perry School
- Sales & Margin
- The HIVE 2.0
- United Planning Organization

FY2016

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About Connect.DC
Connect.DC was created by the Office of the Chief Technology Officer to remove barriers to internet access and increase technology use in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in the District of Columbia.

Cover art by Aniekan Udofia

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