Illinois State Library

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"Eliminate the Digital Divide"

Today's workplace increasingly relies on technology.

Individuals lacking computer skills and regular access to broadband face mounting obstacles in a competitive job market.

Not only does this growing "digital divide" threaten to place low-income citizens even further behind in the job market, but it also jeopardizes the nation's economy.

This supports the fundamental goals of the Illinois State Library that include providing the best available technology and expanding opportunities for vulnerable people who have difficulty using library services.

Partners:

- 92 libraries
  - 11% - 14% unemployment rates
  - 46% of the students (average) qualify for free lunch
- Illinois Department of Commerce Economic Opportunity
- Illinois State Library

Libraries are addressing:

- Increased demands for computer access **by the unemployed**, the disabled and adult literacy students
- Special demands for **employment information**, literacy training, legal information and access to digital books by the blind and physically handicapped
- Increased demands for online library services caused by the economic slowdown

Outcomes:

- 92 libraries expand and improve their local network of public computer centers and provide technology training and other educational services to vulnerable Illinois residents.

- Improve patron skills and develop a technologically-trained workforce in every community, to the benefit of all Illinois residents and businesses.

- Provide increased access to broadband-delivered education, employment and reading services to the public and vulnerable populations, including the unemployed, children, seniors, minorities and persons with disabilities.

ILEADU:

The initiative aims to help librarians throughout the state take advantage of web technologies that foster community participation and develop leadership and innovation.

One team is addressing job seeking resources:

http://www.youtube.com/ILEADUProject#p/u/0/pdlwIn53Yu8