

Project Compass Showcase:

Minnesota State Library Services – Partnering to Close the Digital Divide

Mary Ann Van Cura

maryann.vancura@state.mn.us

651-582-8632



Goals

- ❑ To increase public awareness of the need for digital inclusion as core daily activities move online
- ❑ To increase awareness that libraries can collaborate with community partners to get the word out and increase digital inclusion
- ❑ To centralize resources for libraries and community partners



State Library Agency Role

- ❑ Prepare research summary of who do doesn't have Internet – help others make the case
- ❑ Build working relationships with people across sectors
- ❑ Participate in meetings and capacity building of local cross-sector group (TLC)
- ❑ Participate when someone else has a good idea first
- ❑ Present programs on digital inclusion topics at library association and nonprofit association conferences – with non-library partners



Partners – Informal/Formal

- ❑ Technology Literacy Collaborative
- ❑ Community Technology Empowerment Program
Americorp
- ❑ St. Paul Digital Literacy Standards Task Force
- ❑ Blandin Foundation – Minnesota Intelligent Rural
Communities Initiative (federal broadband stimulus
grant for broadband awareness)
- ❑ University of Minnesota – federal broadband
stimulus grant for public computer centers



Outcomes

- ❑ Community of voices across organizations and sectors speaking about the need for basic digital literacy skills
- ❑ Shared resources and best practices for curriculum, training, policy development
- ❑ Centralized online presence
- ❑ Digital Literacy Checklist – Statewide certificate for those with basic skills?



Quotes

- We didn't know anyone else was working on this. – curriculum developer for federal broadband grant
- We didn't know there were 365 public library buildings with access to the Internet across the state and just 49 Work Force Centers.
- The County Commissioner didn't know that all job applications are now online.