

public television stations can play in creating and delivering content and applications to advance national priorities, especially in the areas of education, health awareness, civic participation, and worker training.

I. EDUCATION

The Recovery Act directs the Commission to include in its national broadband plan “a plan for use of broadband infrastructure and services in advancing . . . education.”⁵ APTS strongly believes that local public television stations can play an important role in this arena. Public television is a mainstay of the American educational system, supporting effective teaching and learning through unparalleled access and reach, quality programming, and effective partnerships at the local and national level. Through federally funded programs like *Ready to Learn* and *Ready to Teach*, and through partnerships with state departments of education, public television has distributed standards-based, efficient, and cost-effective learning tools for students, teachers, and caregivers, preparing them for today’s competitive educational environment. As stations have expanded services in the digital world, on-line content is helping to enhance the learning experience and to bridge in-school and out-of-school learning. Such content and services have strong potential to stimulate the demand for and adoption of broadband by teachers, students, and parents.

For example, developed by Boston public television station WGBH from high-quality, critically acclaimed and trusted sources such as *NOVA* and *A Science Odyssey*, the free Teachers’ Domain collections currently house more than 2,000 standards-based digital resources in all

consumer welfare, civic participation, public safety and homeland security, community development, health care delivery, energy independence and efficiency, education, worker training, private sector investment, entrepreneurial activity, job creation and economic growth, and other national purposes.”).

⁵ See *NOI* at ¶ 88.

content areas for students and teachers. With more than 333,000 registered users in more than 177 countries around the world, Teachers' Domain (www.teachersdomain.org) features video and audio segments, Flash Interactive, images, explanatory articles, lesson plans for teachers, and student-oriented activities. Teachers' Domain has also developed online professional development courses that assist K-12 science teachers in effectively teaching inquiry-based science utilizing media from the collections. Most recently, Teachers Domain has launched an adolescent literacy media resource collection. Teachers choose a science or history topic, then have students proceed through reading passages, videos, and interactive activities, using a glossary to build vocabulary and a note-taking area to submit reading assignments. The resources are designed to help struggling readers in grades 5-12 improve their literacy skills by building comprehension and encouraging active thinking.

Thinkport (www.thinkport.org), developed by Maryland Public Television, aims to harness digital technology to help teachers teach more effectively, inspire students to learn, and build bridges between schools and homes. For example, through "Think Classroom," one of Thinkport's four distinct "experience channels," teachers can utilize a Lesson Builder to help create lessons that utilize rich multimedia content, and take students on Online Field Trips. Thinkport also enables teachers to store resources for future use and facilitates teacher-to-teacher discussions and sharing over the Internet.

KQED in San Francisco has created QUEST, a multimedia series about the people behind Bay Area science and environmental issues and how their work is changing the way Bay Area citizens live. The nucleus of QUEST is its website, which makes available all television and radio broadcasts, as well as web-only segments. Unique features of the site include an interactive map created with Global Positioning Satellite technology to "geotag" locations and

images where QUEST segments were recorded; on-line “Explorations”—nature hikes and walks; a new community science blog with daily contributions from scientists, experts, teachers and students; and discussion groups and photo sharing. The Quest Education Network (EdNet) offers guides, workshops and activities, all available for free download.

On a national level, the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) recently announced the launch of the PBS Digital Learning Library, a PBS system-wide online repository of digital education assets from public broadcasting programs and services nationwide. The Digital Learning Library will contain high-quality multimedia resources from PBS member stations and award-winning PBS broadcast programs, aligned to national and local educational standards, tagged for easy searching, and offered through customized digital services provided by local public television stations. It is anticipated that the Digital Learning Library will enable students to interact with, assemble, share and modify the available resources to create engaging and transformative educational experiences. More than 20 public television stations have been participating in the pilot project, and services will be available to the public in fall 2009.

Finally, through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) Public Television is working to develop the American Archive, which will serve the American public by preserving, digitizing, exhibiting, and sharing the enduring programming produced and distributed by local public television stations. The Archive will make use of emerging digital technologies to allow access to this content by educational and cultural institutions, public broadcasting stations, and the general public. In the education realm, it is envisioned that the Archive could tie content from public television and radio stations through a single portal, accessible through stations websites, through which educators could search for and access content. The Archive could also support efforts to create instructional gaming, online tutoring, and virtual simulation tools.

Public Television has developed a blueprint for the American Archive, and CPB last spring selected Oregon Public Broadcasting to manage a pilot program.

Local public television stations are constantly striving to fulfill their educational missions through different media platforms, and with the assistance of education and broadband stimulus funding, we anticipate that stations will continue to revolutionize the use of Internet resources to enhance education and bring together teachers, students, and caregivers. We encourage the Commission to recognize the fundamental role Public Television plays and can continue to play in creating broadband content and applications to enhance education.

II. HEALTH AWARENESS

The Commission also seeks comment on how it can “generally use broadband to increase health awareness”⁶ For more than 40 years, local public television stations have partnered with other community institutions to address local needs, and health education has become a priority in many communities. Stations provide health education and awareness on multiple media platforms and through community outreach. As the health needs of communities across the country grow, local public television stations are uniquely situated to play an indispensable role in developing and delivering health care and wellness education and disease prevention resources through broadband.

The following are just a few of the multimedia health initiatives local public television stations have undertaken recently:

- KCET in Los Angeles has created *The Time to Care*, a multi-platform project devoted to the unique needs of aging adults and the people who care for them. Expected to launch this year, *The Time to Care* will include a weekly broadcast program that will address concerns for the elderly and for the caregiver, and provide healthy lifestyle information, tips and habits for everyone—regardless of their age now. Additionally, the online component to this initiative will provide a

⁶ *NOI* at ¶ 85.

platform for caregivers to connect to each other and to experts featured on the series, as well as access to additional resources.

- Nationwide, Kentucky ranks number one in deaths per capita from lung cancer, fifth in cardiovascular deaths, and sixth in obesity in the nation. Inactivity and poor diet are contributing to costly and destructive chronic illnesses such as diabetes, cancer and depression. In response to these challenges, KET launched *Be Well Kentucky* aimed at inspiring a culture shift in health attitudes and practices among Kentuckians. On-air, *Be Well Kentucky* has produced and aired the *CommonHealth of Kentucky*, a 13 part series on successful health care models throughout the state. On-line, the initiative created a website that offers health information, programming schedules and opportunities, and toolkits for community involvement. And on-the-ground, KET has offered health literacy workshops for children, families and minority populations—all created with a high-level of cooperation among a wide variety of stake-holders.
- *LiveFIT NH* is a New Hampshire Public Television community engagement project designed to encourage healthy eating and physical activity in children and adults. Recognizing the challenge of maintaining healthy habits, the *LiveFIT NH* project is focused on increasing awareness of and helping to reduce the incidence of childhood obesity, which has become an epidemic in the U.S. Health experts say that obesity causes serious health complications, shortens life spans and strains our health care system. This project consists of broadcast programming, online resources, and on-the-ground outreach through workshops focused on family health.
- Wisconsin Public Television's *Creating Health* initiative was launched in response to viewer interest and the national health debate. *Creating Health* is an ongoing educational initiative that addresses health issues important to Wisconsin residents. By integrating broadcasts, Web tools, and in-person events, *Creating Health* seeks to provide information to help guide individuals in making wise health decisions. Some of the health issues addressed by *Creating Health* focuses on include Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, depression, and the problems faced by those that are without health insurance.
- Iowa Public Television has reached a great number of children across all of Iowa's 99 counties to encourage exercise and healthy eating. On-air, IPTV airs daily "Healthy Minutes" between children's programming that encourages children to be more active and read more. On-the-ground, students logged the minutes they spent exercising and reading throughout the month of April. Dan Wardell, the host of *IPTV KIDS Clubhouse*, worked with teachers and librarians to promote the program and create customized materials. Online, teachers and librarians could track their students' progress as well as access resources on the program.

- In Chicago, WTTW is developing *Health Secrets: What Every Woman Should Know*, a multi-platform initiative dedicated to bring current, reliable, and medically accurate health information and disease prevention strategies to women in the greater Chicago community. On-air, *Health Secrets* will air four one-hour specials. Information and resources will be available online through an extensive and highly interactive web micro-site. Additionally, community wellness events will be conducted in conjunction with the program.
- A partnership between Kaiser Permanente and California Public Television stations invites families to live well, be well and thrive through a campaign that encourages children to eat healthy and stay active. *For Healthy Kids* provides valuable information for families through a series of televised spots focusing on tips for healthy eating, creating a healthy eating environment, and steps to help children maintain a healthy weight. KPBS in San Diego also provides a website full of useful information for children and their parents about kids' health.
- *Little Bites, Big Steps*, created by KERA in Dallas, Texas, is an early childhood education initiative designed to reach parents and care providers of children ages 0-5. This comprehensive five-hour curriculum offers video and online content to help the youngest of children develop healthy eating and exercise habits. The goal of this initiative is to reduce childhood obesity and its related effects. KERA is well on its way to impacting the intended 60,000 children and indirectly impacting 500,000 children through partnerships with other national organizations and broadcast media.
- Combining digital media with television broadcast, Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) of St. Paul, Minnesota created the Emergency and Community Health Outreach (ECHO) broadcast program. ECHO is a collection of health and safety programs that have been translated into Spanish, Hmong, Khmer, Lao, Vietnamese, Somali, as well as English, in order to relay vital information to the diverse communities in Minnesota. It is very important that people have the ability to get good information about their health – in their own language, and in ways that respect their culture. Programs in the ECHO television series provide information about topics such as flu prevention and care, exposure to poisons and dangerous chemicals, and how to keep homes safe. If there is ever a major public health emergency, ECHO takes to the airwaves in order to give information in the variety of languages in order to reach all of the diverse population. ECHO is available on the TPT Minnesota channel and the ECHO Minnesota web site.

As the Commission develops its National Broadband Plan, we hope it will recognize the important role local public television stations are playing, in partnership with their local officials, hospitals, and community institutions, to address health issues in innovative ways through the Internet.

III. CIVIC PARTICIPATION

The Commission is also instructed by Congress to formulate “a plan for use of broadband infrastructure and services in advancing . . . civic participation,” and seeks information on “new uses of broadband that would further open government and civic participation.”⁷ Local public television stations have been at the forefront of the development of broadband programs and applications to enhance civic participation. For example, the first round of Public Media Innovation Grants from CPB in 2007 focused on applications to use new media to enhance coverage of national and local elections in the fall of 2008:

- Through its “Citizen Voices” project, grantee KPBS in San Diego trained citizen bloggers to participate in the station’s coverage of the 2008 elections. The bloggers were able to approach the election from a hyper-local perspective, discussing city council races, school board races, and local propositions from their unique perspectives as neighborhood residents. The blog was the station’s top news and public affairs blog during 2008.
- Grantee Vermont PBS created Vermont Primary Tracker, an online forum featuring social networking, audio, and video, for voter information and discussion targeted to senior citizens. The station is considering converting the system into a complement to its monthly public affairs program *Public Square*. Vermont PBS has also begun to offer its technology and know-how in running web chats as a service to other nonprofit organizations in the state. For example, it supported a chat allowing high school students to talk directly with the Secretary of State about election and voting issues.
- Grantee Wisconsin Public Television undertook a project to experiment with the delivery of voter information on national and local elections to mobile hand-held Internet-connected devices. WPT launched a mobile election website, provided downloadable audio and video, and employed texting and other social networking technologies.
- Grantee WXXI in Rochester, New York, through its project “Overcoming Barriers to Civic Participation,” examined ways to use the Internet to provide the deaf and hard-of-hearing with full access to information about political candidates and election issues. WXXI’s election website included a section for its captioned content, and a Civic Sense Laboratory, where the station experimented with techniques to improve on-line accessibility.

⁷ *NOI* at ¶ 70.

Local public television stations are utilizing a wide array of digital tools to facilitate their roles as community conveners and sources of important local information, particularly to those that are unserved or underserved by commercial media. We encourage the Commission to acknowledge the crucial role public television stations are playing in developing innovative applications for the use of broadband to enhance civic participation.

IV. WORKER TRAINING

Finally, the Recovery Act directs the Commission to provide “a plan for the use of broadband infrastructure and services in advancing . . . worker training.”⁸ We urge the Commission to recognize the role Public Television can play in this area. Local public television stations have extensive experience in using a variety of media, including broadband, to provide effective worker training programs, and in response to this difficult economic climate, stations are ramping up their efforts to provide Americans with access to information that will enhance their likelihood of success in the workplace.

For example, the New Jersey Network, in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, is using a variety of delivery systems, including online services, to offer customized, personalized access to expanded educational opportunities for adult learners. The program, called Workforce Learning Link, uses digital television technology, streaming video, computer software, the Internet and print materials to provide interactive training services to welfare registrants, dislocated workers and other job seekers.

Kentucky Educational Television teams with the Kentucky Department of Education, the PBS Adult Learning Service, and the National Center on Adult Literacy to provide LiteracyLink, which connects underserved and hard-to-reach adults with teachers for quality adult basic

⁸ *NOI* at ¶ 94.

education and GED preparation through a variety of media. Workplace Essential Skills and GED Connection, two integrated instructional systems that have come out of the partnership, are being used by numerous other states. LiteracyLink also seeks to provide cutting-edge and cost-efficient technology-related staff development for the adult literacy professionals, and to support instructors and program directors with timely, quality learning opportunities and tools, and virtual classrooms. LiteracyLink's newest project is ESL/CivicsLink, an on-line program designed for adult education English as a Second Language teachers and offering professional development modules and related resources.

Finally, Public Television is one of the nation's foremost creators of professional development programming for teachers. Public Television's *Ready to Teach* program, authorized under No Child Left Behind, promotes the development of digital educational services aimed at enhancing teacher performance. *Ready to Teach* funds PBS TeacherLine, a fully facilitated, online professional development program that improves teacher quality, particularly in the core areas of reading and math. The program also provides station-based grants to support programs such as VITAL of WNET/Thirteen, New York; e-learning for Educators, a multi-state program headed by Alabama Public Television; and the Help with English Language Proficiency (HELP) program created by Rocky Mountain PBS in Colorado. Since 2004, professional development programs funded by *Ready to Teach* have served more than 90,000 teachers. Public Television, a trusted provider of educational programming through a variety of media to learners of all ages, is a natural partner for the government as it examines how broadband can be used effectively to enhance worker training.

We appreciate this opportunity to share with the Commission just a few of the ways Public Television has created innovative content and applications that can stimulate demand for

and adoption of broadband, especially among underserved populations. We look forward to working with the Commission and the government as it develops a plan for the use of broadband to address our nation's challenges and advance our nation's goals.

Respectfully submitted,

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