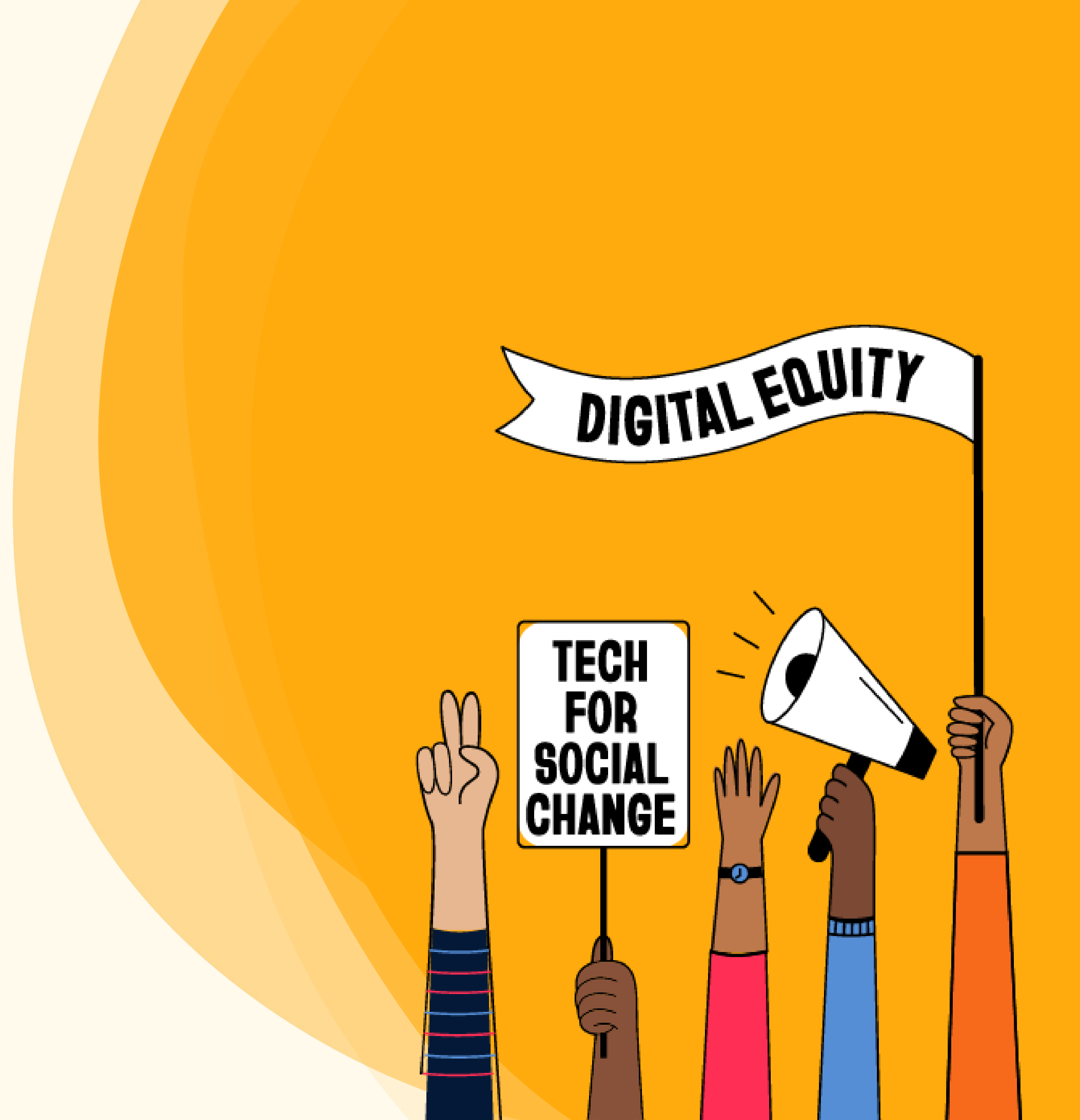


In stories and numbers:
**A decade of the
Digital Inclusion
Fellowship**

nten.org/dif



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Over the years, fellows have come from libraries, housing authorities, adult literacy organizations, refugee and immigrant support agencies, parent centers, parks and recreation departments, and many other community-rooted organizations.

Introduction

In 2025, we celebrated a decade of Digital Inclusion Fellowship cohorts.

When we launched the Fellowship, we knew we would learn alongside fellows, adjust and evolve the program over time, and continue building in ways we could not fully anticipate. **Our goals were clear from the beginning: increase the number of digital equity champions across the country, help more organizations understand digital literacy as essential to their mission, and expand digital inclusion programs that sustained beyond the program's completion.**

Those goals have continued to guide the Fellowship through every cohort.

There are many barriers that keep communities digitally divided, and no single approach to digital inclusion work. Fellows have built programs shaped by what their communities actually need — from helping someone apply for jobs online, to supporting newly arrived refugees navigating digital systems for the first time, to creating spaces where older adults can learn technology skills without judgment or embarrassment.

The Fellowship was also built around the idea that organizations already serving their communities are often best positioned to do this work. Over the years, fellows have come from libraries, housing authorities, adult literacy organizations, refugee and immigrant support agencies, parent centers, parks and recreation departments, and many other community-rooted organizations.

The cohort model remains central to the program. Fellows are connected to a network of peers doing similar work across the country, even when they may be the only person focused on digital inclusion within their own organization or region. Many fellows have also developed partnerships across their cities and communities, connecting participants to training, devices, internet access, and long-term support systems. Many of these projects have sustained and grown beyond the Fellowship period, and organizations have built robust digital inclusion programs as a result of this Fellowship.



A decade of impact

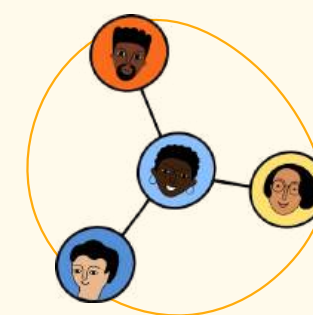
Since 2015, the Digital Inclusion Fellowship has supported community-based digital inclusion work across the country.

153 fellows supported **~60k** participants reached

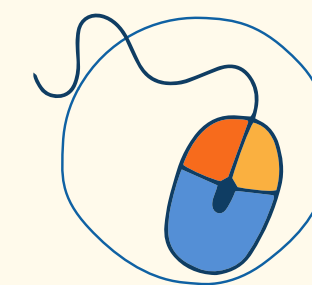


28 regions across the United States **125+** organizations

Together, fellows have:



Reached **58,957** participants



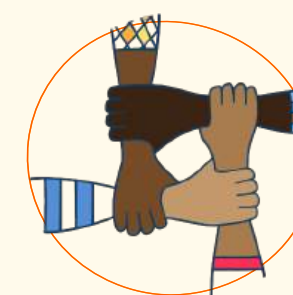
Delivered **143,066** hours of training



Distributed more than **5,900** devices



Led **350+** leadership activities



Built **1,230+** community partnerships

Many fellows continued to expand their work beyond the Fellowship, extending the impact of their projects well beyond what is reflected here.



2016 Fellow: Wendy Pearson

Kansas City Public Library — Kansas City, MO

Project

As a Digital Inclusion Fellow, Wendy Pearson helped launch **weekly Tech Coach drop-in sessions** at the Southeast branch of the **Kansas City Public Library, located in one of the city’s most underserved communities**. The sessions created a welcoming, low-pressure space where community members could ask questions, practice skills, and receive one-on-one support from staff and volunteers.

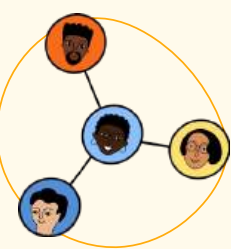
The project also helped establish Tech Coach volunteers across five library branches and introduced Learning Circles focused on digital skills ranging from introductory computer use to more advanced topics. Community partners were encouraged to begin integrating digital literacy support into their own services, expanding the reach of the work beyond the library system itself.

Impact

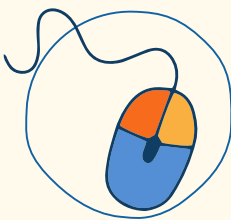
One participant came into the library each week carrying an old flip phone. He wanted to learn more about technology, but did not know where to begin. At first, he practiced sending texts and photos to his wife. Over time, he became more comfortable and started learning computer skills as well.

After three months, he returned with a smartphone and a laptop of his own. What stayed with Wendy was **not just the new devices, but the confidence and patience he had developed through the process**.

The program reached:



456
participants



1,611
hours of training
delivered



39
volunteers
trained



2017 Fellow: Atif Hamed

Austin Pathways — Austin, TX

Project

During his Fellowship year, Atif Hamed helped expand digital literacy programming for residents connected to Austin Pathways and the Housing Authority of the City of Austin. The work included teaching basic and intermediate computer skills courses covering topics such as Microsoft Office, typing, internet navigation, and digital communication.

One major component of the project was the **Mobility Ambassador program**, where residents learned **how to use smartphones and computers to plan trips and navigate transportation systems more independently**.

Atif also used a **train-the-trainer approach**, helping prepare public housing residents to support others in learning digital skills and using technology confidently.

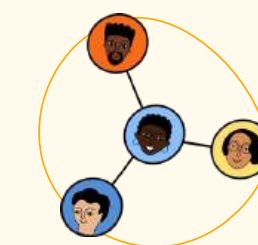
Impact

The project helped nearly 135 participants in the Family Self-Sufficiency program **earn computers for home use, allowing them to continue learning outside of class**.

The work also expanded Austin Pathways' reach into Arabic- and Spanish-speaking communities, where residents often faced additional barriers accessing digital literacy support. Nearly 50 Arabic- and Spanish-speaking residents participated in classes during the Fellowship year.

Participants who completed classes received refurbished desktop computers and certificates recognizing their work, helping many continue **building digital skills tied to employment, education, and daily life**.

The program reached:



135
participants



2018 Fellow: Patricia Steward

Chicago Housing Authority — Chicago, IL

Project

As the Digital Inclusion Fellow for the Chicago Housing Authority, Patricia Steward introduced and implemented digital literacy courses for public housing residents and surrounding community members. The work focused heavily on **supporting older adults and residents who had limited experience using computers.**

Training covered foundational digital literacy topics including learning computer parts, using social media, recognizing online scams, creating email accounts, and building familiarity with Microsoft Word and internet navigation.

The Fellowship also helped launch ACE (Access, Connect, and Empower) training in partnership with Literacy Chicago. Participants met twice a week over four weeks to develop **practical computer and internet skills that could support employment, communication, and day-to-day tasks.**

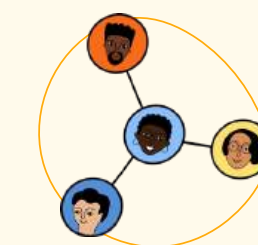
Impact

This was the first time digital literacy training had been offered through the Chicago Housing Authority's Resident Services Department.

In partnership with Comcast, the program expanded outreach efforts beyond CHA residents, helping more than **125 participants attend trainings focused on computers, Microsoft Word, and job readiness.**

The project also strengthened **digital literacy support for seniors by training volunteers and staff members** who worked directly with older adult residents.

The program reached:



125
participants



2019 Fellows: Kyra Gomez & Susana Jerez

Charlotte Bilingual Preschool — Charlotte, NC

Project

Kyra Gomez and Susana Jerez developed digital inclusion services for parents participating in the **Charlotte Bilingual Preschool Family Program**. Their work focused on helping families build the digital skills needed to support their children's education both at home and in school.

The Fellows launched a computer lab where parents could access the internet, use computers, and receive support navigating digital tools and systems. They also trained parent volunteers to help other participants with basic digital literacy support, creating a stronger peer learning environment within the program.

In partnership with the local library, the Fellowship supported monthly workshops covering topics such as internet basics, online privacy, digital safety, and general computer use.

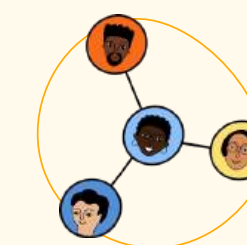
Impact

The project reached 220 participants and delivered 450 participant hours, while creating a more consistent access to technology for **families who previously had limited opportunities to use computers** or internet-connected devices.

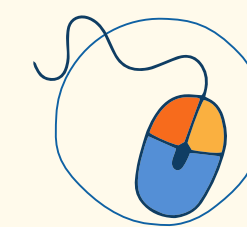
Parents participating in the program were able to build confidence using digital tools connected to education, communication, and daily life, while the volunteer model helped extend support throughout the preschool community.

The Fellowship also strengthened collaboration between the preschool and local library partners, creating additional opportunities for **families to stay connected to digital learning resources beyond the classroom**.

The program reached:



220
participants



450
hours of training
delivered



2020 Fellow: Maddie McKinney

Deschutes County WIC — Deschutes County, OR

Project

Maddie McKinney's project focused on increasing digital equity within the WIC population by helping participants build confidence using online tools and services that had become essential to accessing support. The project included direct assistance with downloading and using the WIC app, creating WIChealth.org accounts, and identifying trustworthy online information.

Maddie prioritized **support for older adults and immigrant communities**, especially Spanish-speaking participants who often faced additional barriers navigating digital systems. During the Fellowship, she developed a **Spanish-language digital literacy course** designed specifically for WIC participants and their needs.

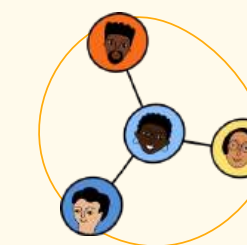
Impact

The course became a resource that extended beyond the original project. **Other WIC offices across the state began using the curriculum, expanding access to culturally relevant digital literacy support in additional counties.**

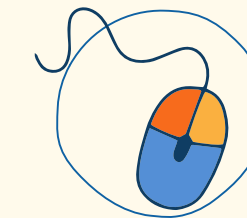
The impact was especially visible in participation. Completion of online nutrition education in Spanish **increased by 2200%** during the project period.

In total, the program reached 1,679 participants, delivered 250 participant hours, and engaged **494 Spanish-speaking participants** through digital literacy support and online education programming.

The program reached:



1,679
participants



250
hours of training
delivered



2021 Fellow: Josh Everett

Project Return — Nashville, TN

Project

Josh Everett helped reintroduce a **computer literacy class for people returning to work after incarceration**. The class was offered weekly as part of Project Return's broader job-readiness programming and focused on helping participants develop foundational computer skills that many had never had access to.

Participants used laptops provided through partnerships with local organizations and received **support with tasks connected to employment and reentry** — including job searching, online forms, resumes, and basic computer navigation.

The project also included partnerships with the Nashville Technology Council, Vanderbilt University's business fraternity, and the local library system to support instruction and device access.

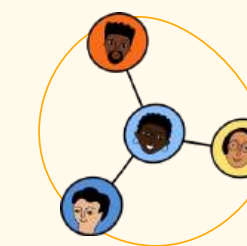
Impact

Many participants entered the program with limited digital experience due to barriers that existed both before and during incarceration.

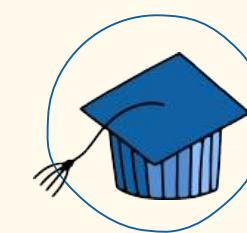
The classes created a consistent space where participants could build practical technology skills connected directly to employment opportunities and long-term stability after reentry.

The program trained 293 participants through classes and one-on-one assistance, while more than **10 volunteers and staff members were trained to support ongoing instruction**.

The program reached:



293
participants



10
volunteers
trained



2022 Fellow: Ricardo Reinoso

Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority — Cleveland, OH

Project

Ricardo Reinoso developed a **basic digital literacy course for older residents** living at the Quarrytown property within the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority. Residents had requested digital literacy support for years, but the program had not been offered in over five years.

The project focused on helping residents **build confidence using computers** and internet-connected tools in ways that supported communication, information access, and day-to-day life. Partnerships with organizations including PCs for People, Baldwin Wallace University, RET3, and the Ashbury Senior Computer Community Center **helped expand both device access and instructional support.**

Ricardo also worked on increasing participation in Cleveland's Digital Learn platform through community outreach and engagement efforts.

Impact

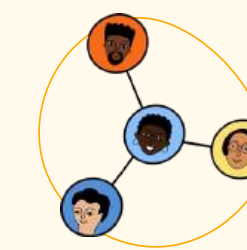
Participants who completed the course **received refurbished desktop computers, allowing them to continue learning and practicing at home.**

The Fellowship also helped rebuild local partnerships that supported digital inclusion work across multiple housing communities and senior properties.

Through outreach efforts, participation in cleveland.digitallearn.org increased from 41 online users to 130 participants during the project period.

Ricardo also reflected on how the Fellowship changed his own approach to digital inclusion work, **helping him think more intentionally about long-term strategy, organization, and community impact.**

The program reached:



130
participants



130
devices
distributed



2023 Fellows: Djimet Dogo & Maria Lara

IRCO and Free Geek — Portland, OR

Project

Djimet Dogo and Maria Lara led a project to **increase access to digital literacy for immigrants and refugees** served by IRCO. The project aimed to help participants build the skills needed to use the internet, navigate digital systems, and access opportunities connected to employment, communication, education, and daily life.

A major component of the Fellowship involved **training digital literacy navigators directly from within the communities** IRCO serves. These navigators represented diverse cultural and language backgrounds and helped the organization strengthen relationships with communities that are often harder to reach through traditional programming.

The Fellowship significantly expanded IRCO's internal capacity for digital inclusion work and changed how the organization approached long-term digital literacy support.

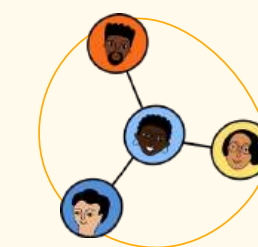
Impact

The project trained **43 digital literacy navigators** — 13 more than originally planned.

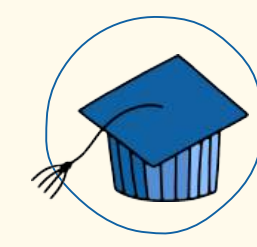
More than **500 participants received digital literacy training, Chromebook devices, one year of free internet service**, troubleshooting support, and ongoing access to computer labs and technical assistance.

Participants were also able to receive replacement support through partnerships with T-Mobile and Samsung, helping ensure that access to devices and connectivity could continue beyond the initial training period.

The program reached:



500
participants



43
volunteers
trained



500
devices
distributed



2024 Fellow: Collyn Mosquito

Mill Creek Promise Program — Mill Creek, UT

Project

Collyn Mosquito created a six-week digital skills course for residents of Millcreek City using curriculum elements from organizations including Microsoft and the Digital Skills Library. Prior to the Fellowship, digital inclusion had only been a small part of the organization's broader work around economic wellbeing and housing stability.

Through the Fellowship, the organization began **integrating digital inclusion more intentionally into other areas of community support, including financial stability, employment, housing access, and education.**

The project also helped strengthen Collyn's own skills in project development, management, partnership building, and funding strategy.

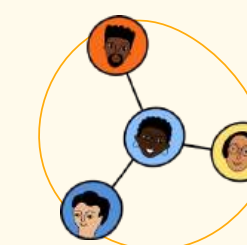
Impact

The project trained 262 participants over 308 hours. Further, the Fellowship shifted how the organization understood digital inclusion work. **Access was no longer viewed as just an internet connection, but as a combination of devices, affordable internet, and digital skills.**

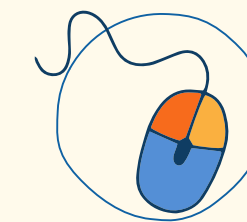
Participants described using the skills they developed to **return to school, pursue better employment opportunities, and even start businesses.**

One participant from Peru joined the program partly because of the opportunity to receive a free laptop, but also because she wanted digital skills that could help her pursue office work and continue her studies at a local community college.

The program reached:



262
participants



308
hours of training
delivered



2025 Fellow: Melissa Fulmer

San Antonio Public Library — San Antonio, TX

Project

Melissa Fulmer's project focused on creating **accessible visual learning materials** using Microsoft accessibility features and other digital tools. Her work centered on **supporting people with disabilities, neurodiverse individuals, and community members with low digital literacy skills.**

The project emphasized reducing barriers by creating **simplified, highly visual learning materials** that helped participants navigate digital systems more independently and confidently.

Melissa focused specifically on using built-in accessibility tools within Microsoft Windows and Microsoft Edge to make digital learning more approachable for patrons with a wide range of needs.

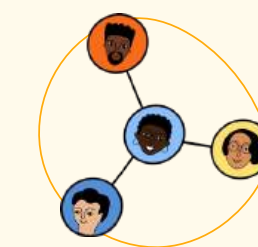
Impact

The project trained 346 participants over 266 hours. One participant who deeply impacted Melissa's work was **an illiterate veteran with low vision in one eye and hearing difficulties.** He traveled across town to visit the library because he needed **help searching for housing.**

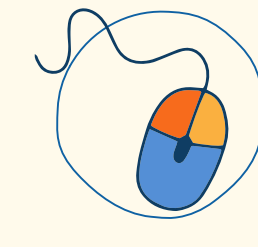
Using accessibility tools, Melissa was able to slow down the process, reduce frustration, and help him hear and understand information as they worked together. Staff members noticed a **visible change in his demeanor** during the interaction, as his frustration and distrust gradually eased.

By the end of the visit, he left feeling grateful and more confident navigating the process.

The program reached:



346
participants



266
hours of training
delivered

Partners

Thanks to the partners who have funded the Fellowship over the years.



A message from
our partner,
35 Mile Foundation:

We were proud to support NTEN's Digital Inclusion Fellowship. At 35 Mile Foundation, we know that sustainable digital equity requires investing in the next generation of digital equity champions who are equipped to build lasting, community-rooted change for historically marginalized people. NTEN's decade-long track record of cultivating those leaders made them the ideal partner to make that vision a reality.

