

DAAI Plan Community Coalition Call

Thursday, November 9, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Facilitators: Summerlin & Brown

- Deana Brown, Library Learning Consultant, Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL)
- Chelsea Summerlin, Digital Inclusion Consultant, ICfL

Coalition Call Presenters:

- Stephanie Bailey-White, State Librarian, ICfL
- Dylan Baker, Deputy State Librarian, ICfL
- Amber Smyer & Stephanie Guyton, the University of Idaho Extension Digital Economy and AmeriCorps Team

Meeting Recorder: Shaela Priaulx-Soho, E-Services Assistant, ICfL

Agenda:

Time	Item	Minutes	Who
11:00 a.m.	Introductions & Purpose of Call	5	Brown
11:05 a.m.	Updates on the DAAI plan	15	Baker, Bailey-White
11:20 a.m.	IdahoDigitalSkills.org	10	Summerlin
11:30 a.m.	AmeriCorps efforts and partnerships	30	University of Idaho: Digital Economy Team
12:00 p.m.	Office Hours	30	Brown, Summerlin

Meeting Notes

Introductions and Purpose of Call

Brown greeted everyone and provided an overview of the quarterly community coalition call. She then outlined the agenda, emphasizing that the ICfL is spearheading the development of the [Digital Access for All Idahoans Plan](#) (DAAI Plan).

Updates on the DAAI plan

Baker introduced himself and shared that we have completed the [Digital Access for All Idahoans Plan](#), which is ready for submission to NTIA (National Telecommunications and Information Administration). Each state had a one-year window to develop its digital equity plan. Idaho's performance period commenced on November 15th last year, marked by a kick-off event in Boise featuring an Internet for All Coordination workshop.

During our previous call, we unveiled the draft plan for public comment, receiving valuable input through nine public comments and additional feedback from partners and NTIA. The

Boise State University Idaho Policy Institute meticulously addressed public comments. All comments are available in the appendix. BSU also added resources and metrics to enhance the plan's comprehensiveness.

Idaho stands as one of the first states to submit its final plan. Printed summary handbooks are in production and will soon be available for distribution. Baker said that copies are currently at the printer, aiming for shipment and release within the next month. Additionally, for those interested, a link and QR code will be provided to access and share the plan digitally, complemented by the availability of extra printed copies.

Baker then handed the floor to Bailey-White for additional insights.

Bailey-White expressed her enthusiasm for the plan, conveying appreciation for the input received on the call and from participants statewide. She expressed relief that an extension wasn't necessary and emphasized the plan's significance as a comprehensive roadmap for the next five years. Bailey-White eagerly awaits the unfolding of the next steps, including each state's allocation and the practical steps toward implementation.

Bailey-White passed the meeting back to Baker to discuss the next steps.

Baker provided an overview. He explained that the plan has been submitted to NTIA, and they will assess it against their criteria to ensure it meets all requirements. Baker expressed confidence in the plan, highlighting the extensive input received during the draft phase, which allowed for necessary adjustments. Acknowledging the possibility of feedback from NTIA, he emphasized the commitment to keeping everyone informed once the final plan is accepted. Baker underscored that this plan will be a foundational guide for future years, with anticipated regular updates and revisions.

Moving forward, Baker detailed the funding phase. The next stage involves the capacity fund, made available by NTIA through two funding buckets. The first comprises state capacity funds facilitated through the ICfL, designated for implementing statewide projects and subgrants outlined in the plan. The exact allocations for each state will be disclosed at the beginning of 2024, pending NTIA's announcement. Baker highlighted the anticipation of receiving these funds in 2024, enabling the initiation of projects.

The second funding bucket involves eligible organizations applying directly for competitive funds, accessible in early 2024. Participants can apply through the ICfL or directly to NTIA for their projects. While NTIA couldn't be present on the call, Baker assured that once additional information becomes available, comprehensive details will be disseminated to keep everyone well-informed about the application process.

Question in the chat: "What does NTIA stand for?" Summerlin explained: National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Summerlin shared the link to the [newsletter](#) where you can stay informed between the community calls. Bailey-White shared in the chat that NTIA is the source for the Digital Equity funds and the infrastructure funding (\$580 million) coming to Idaho.

IdahoDigitalSkills.org

Brown discussed tools and resources beneficial for communities across Idaho, passing the floor to Summerlin.

Summerlin, sharing her screen, introduced [Idaho Digital Skills](#), which features free, self-guided learning resources. Alongside these resources, she highlighted the availability of the [Digital Navigators](#) program, designed to aid and empower Idahoans in their digital skills journey, offering personalized one-on-one assistance focusing on getting online, basic tech support, and access to library resources.

Next, Summerlin introduced the new [Resource Directory](#), envisioned as a comprehensive one-stop shop. Displaying the resources page during the presentation, she showcased its features, including maps, keyword search options, and an alphabetical order of statewide resources. Summerlin encouraged participants on the directory to utilize the survey option for change requests or additions, emphasizing its dynamic nature as a living resource evolving throughout the plan's implementation.

To further enhance outreach, Summerlin mentioned the availability of promotional materials for those willing to contribute to marketing efforts. Brown shared the [ICfL Online Store](#) to get free promotional items. If you have any questions, let Summerlin know. Summerlin can be reached by email at chelsea.summerlin@libraries.idaho.gov.

Brown expressed her excitement about the Digital Navigator program in the state. She highlighted the program as an invaluable resource for directing community members, mainly when in-person assistance is unavailable. Brown emphasized that the Digital Navigator program is a crucial tool in bridging the digital divide experienced by individuals in the state. Encouraging active participation, she urged everyone to distribute digital materials and share feedback, drawing on practitioner and user perspectives to continually refine and enhance the program's effectiveness.

Smyer asked about additional resources found on the ICfL website. She saw the Frontier workbook and asked for more background and the vision of how that one is to be used. Summerlin explained it is the [Navigating the Digital Frontier](#) and is an adaptation of our [Digital Access Workbook](#) created for folks to develop broadband action teams throughout the state. The Frontier Workbook assists individuals in contemplating potential programs and strategizing for the allocation of implementation funding when available.

AmeriCorps Efforts, Partnerships, and Upcoming Activities

Brown transitioned the meeting to Amber Smyer and Stephanie Guyton from the University of Idaho Digital Economy Program and AmeriCorps.

Guyton took the lead, sharing her screen and introducing the Digital Economy Program with the University of Idaho. Launched in 2022 with support from the Idaho legislature, the

Digital Economy Program (DEP) is dedicated to enhancing the capacity of Idahoans to leverage the evolving digital economy for more inclusive development. The program also aligns with efforts for broadband internet expansion, recognizing that mere broadband availability doesn't ensure active participation. The overarching goals of the DEP include:

- Empowering Families
- Providing Education
- Job Creation
- Retaining Local Talent
- Improving Rural Viability
- Strengthening the Tax Base

Guyton elaborated on the structure of their team, consisting of 4 staff and 6 AmeriCorps members operating under the guidance of Dr. Paul Lewin. Geographically dispersed across Idaho, Guyton visually represented their locations through a map. She highlighted that three of the six AmeriCorps members would share insights into their roles and efforts across the state.

Providing an overview of their program's focus area, Guyton emphasized their commitment to developing partnerships and fostering collaboration to address the digital divide effectively. She invited participants to explore potential alignments with their ongoing efforts, expressing a keen interest in further visits and interactions.

Guyton detailed the various components of their program:

- Remote Work Professional Certificates:
 - Participants can develop skills tailored for remote work.
 - Exposure to online tools is essential for remote work.
 - The program cost was reduced from \$149 to as low as \$50 for most Idahoans.
 - Additional support through career planning sessions, including negotiating remote work arrangements with employers.
 - Advocacy for awareness, welcoming support from participants.
 - Aim to connect with Idaho employers, emphasizing the desire to retain Idaho talent within the state.
 - Offering a remote work leader course.
 - Providing a free recruiting platform dedicated to remote and hybrid work.
- E-Commerce Training Module:
 - Focused training for small businesses, covering strategies for increased exposure and transitioning to online platforms.
- ACP (Affordable Connectivity Program):
 - Assisting with information on monthly discounts for internet services and one-time device discounts.
 - Empowering communities to bridge the digital divide.
- AmeriCorps Engagement:

- AmeriCorps, a federal agency for national service and volunteerism, works towards bridging the digital divide.
- Members serve terms ranging from 300 to 1700 hours, addressing unmet needs in the community.
- Members receive a living stipend and an education reward.
- Idaho secured funding for 8 AmeriCorps members, supporting efforts until August 2024.
- Engaging in creating networks and actively working to bridge the digital divide.

Guyton conveyed that each AmeriCorps member would share insights into their current roles. Before transitioning, she welcomed questions from the audience.

A participant inquired about promoting the program to a broader audience and whether direct promotion was acceptable. Smyer said yes, expressing their willingness to disseminate information on external platforms, including websites. They welcomed various avenues for advertising and collaboration, expressing openness to one-on-one discussions.

A participant sought further clarification on the engagement with local employers and businesses. Smyer clarified that this aspect is part of the program's second phase. While the remote work training is already underway, the next phase involves connecting with Idaho employers to inform them about available resources. Acknowledging that they haven't extensively explored this aspect yet, Smyer encouraged any suggestions, connections, or ideas from the audience for this upcoming phase.

Question in the chat, "Have you plugged into WDC (Workforce Development Council)?" Smyer responded that they have engaged with WDC to some extent and are awaiting confirmation regarding approval for training dollars. They expressed openness to additional contacts or insights from anyone in the audience. Guyton supplemented this by mentioning their partnerships with Vocational Rehabilitation and the Idaho Veterans Chamber of Commerce, emphasizing collaborative efforts to reduce the cost of the Remote Work course.

Brown asked if people want to stay in the loop about developments, how do they sign up? Smyer shared the following links:

- [University of Idaho Digital Economy Program](#)
- [University of Idaho Digital Economy Newsletter](#)
- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/uiextension-digital-economy-program/>
- https://www.instagram.com/invites/contact/?i=1auv3nq5ah2os&utm_content=s4nf9jw
- <https://www.facebook.com/IdahoDEP>

Guyton thanked everyone for the questions and introduced the first AmeriCorps member, Kylie Holveck.

Holveck introduced herself as the Digital Literacy Coordinator in Latah County and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. She shared her recent experiences, detailing the last sixty days spent conducting listening tours and engaging with key stakeholders. Holveck highlighted her upcoming initiative, hosting the county's inaugural digital equity meeting on Tuesday, November 14th.

Amber Hastings, the Digital Literacy Coordinator for the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe, introduced herself and detailed her recent engagements and outreach efforts, including:

- Building partnerships locally for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and raising awareness through outreach.
- Participating in district meetings, travel, and business programs.
- Connecting with community members.
- Active involvement in resource fairs.
- Engagement in K-12 programs to reach multigenerational homes and collaborate with parent organizations.
- Involvement in Tribal ACP Qualifying Programs through the Education Department.
- Conducting meetings with ACP to offer assistance with digital skills and providing office hours and resources for students needing help with FAFSA applications.
- Participation in consumer programs.

Hastings highlighted her efforts in establishing better partnerships with local organizations, acknowledging the outstanding support from the Sho-Ban News Editor in enhancing visibility and awareness, particularly regarding ACP and digital skills.

She discussed challenges faced in ACP enrollment, including:

- Lack of understanding about Enhanced Tribal Benefit.
- Addressing misinformation, clarifying that tribal membership is not required and tribal IDs are unnecessary; individuals only need to be on tribal land.
- Dealing with both Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and USAC representatives.
- Explaining rural addresses, including the concept of extension roads.
- Navigating tribal-specific programs.
- Addressing the lack of ISP choice in some areas, where the available providers may not offer optimal services.
- Ensuring follow-up and persistence in confirming that applied benefits meet the community members' needs.

Hastings shared a success story, mentioning an email from a community member who successfully applied her Lifeline benefit that morning.

McKenzie Davis introduced herself, serving the Lemhi County area, highlighting her focus on community partnerships. She outlined her initiatives, including:

- Conducting Tech Tuesdays at the local library.
- Exploring the expansion of office hours.

- Assisting individuals in setting up email accounts, applying for jobs, signing up for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), crafting resumes, and providing guidance on recognizing scams.
- Collaborating with city hall to establish and enhance their Facebook page.

Smyer revisited the map, highlighting the locations of team members and various activities across the state.

Sasha Rojas Zaragoza, the Digital Coordinator of Treasure Valley, then introduced herself and discussed her initiatives, which include:

- Assisting new arrivals with basic skills such as setting up a phone, creating an email, and checking voicemail to meet their first 90 days' appointments.
- Implementing creative approaches to address language barriers, particularly with non-English speakers.
- Collaborating with Tina Barnett at Learn Idaho to provide digital skills and essential skills training for older adults.
- Partnering with Family Advocates to offer similar support to the Hispanic population, tailoring classes to their specific interests and needs, such as buying and selling online. They also provide library tours.
- Raising awareness about the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).

Smyer shared the contact information in the chat:

- **Adam Bennion** Teton Fremont Counties abennion@uidaho.edu
- **Amber Hastings** Shoshone-Bannock Tribes & Fort Hall ahastings@uidaho.edu
- **Kylie Holveck** Latah County & Coeur d'Alene Tribe kholveck@uidaho.edu
- Keara Donahue St. Maries & Benewah County
- **McKenzie Davis** Lemhi County mckenzie@uidaho.edu
- **Sasha Rojas Zaragoza** International Rescue Committee sashar@uidaho.edu

Smyer expressed the team's willingness to engage with any organizations for training and strategy sessions, considering this model as a potential means to expand capacity and adoption throughout the state. She hopes this effort serves as a pilot for future initiatives.

She delved into the logistics of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP):

- Idaho received a federal grant of \$392,666.
- There is a short timeline to increase Idaho's enrollment by August 2024.
- ACP offers discounts on home internet and devices.
- The team seeks to hire a program specialist responsible for developing ACP strategies, increasing awareness and enrollment through promotion events, marketing campaigns, partnerships, and collaboration.
- Interested parties can sign up for newsletters to maintain ongoing relationships and receive updates at dep@uidaho.edu.

Smyer welcomed questions from the audience and highlighted the importance of ACP awareness among front-office staff. She emphasized the need for staff to be well informed to share ACP information effectively. Smyer mentioned discussions with the AmeriCorps team about developing training sessions on enrollment, and she noted that Education Superhighway provides free online courses to assist individuals in the enrollment process.

Brown highlighted the question in the chat: “Does anyone serve Central Idaho?” Smyer responded affirmatively, indicating that she covers Central Idaho. She expressed her desire to have AmeriCorps representation in that area and shared that recruiting has been challenging, with no applicants received thus far. She is keen to reach out further to encourage people to apply.

Wrap-Up

At 12:03 p.m., Brown informed everyone that the meeting had reached the top of the hour. She thanked all participants for joining and said that information about the next chat would be sent out. Brown mentioned the hope for more concrete information from NTIA in the upcoming communications.

Office Hours

Brown asked about the remote training and invited those who had taken it to share their experiences.

- Rojas Zaragoza found it beneficial because it incorporated commonly used programs and addressed remote work nuances, including environmental considerations. She appreciated the detailed approach and the flexibility of scheduling options, either daytime or evening. Rojas Zaragoza highlighted the value of having a designated person for one-on-one discussions about career advancement.
- Hastings expressed that the training was excellent for learning about programs and tools that enhance workflow. She provided an example of her mother, a long-time remote worker, finding it beneficial to refresh her skills and navigate the remote work landscape.
- Guyton enjoyed exploring questions related to interacting with individuals in different time zones. She appreciated the focus on mindfulness regarding time zone differences and shared her positive experience of collaborating on projects with diverse time zones. Guyton emphasized the importance of granting each other grace and gaining an authentic understanding of the remote work experience, especially when working with individuals of varying ages and levels of knowledge and experience.

A participant asked about training on FAFSA. He would love any information on how to help students (and their families) apply for FAFSA if anyone knows of digital navigator training in this area. Brown provided the link:

<https://nextsteps.idaho.gov/curriculum/fafsa-2>

Summerlin shared [telehealth resources](#) for digital navigators.

Smyer asked if anyone else is implementing a digital navigator platform. Brown suggested all the people on the call are a good resource to reach out to.

Bailey-White inquired about the experiences of working in the St. Anthony area and partnering with correctional facilities, seeking any tips or successes to share.

- Adam Bennion discussed navigating the challenges to make the partnership work. He emphasized the importance of establishing a consistent schedule to provide resources, taking into account the constraints of the correctional facility environment. Workshops were developed to offer one-time resources, recognizing potential attendance limitations. The focus is on outreach and resource development, utilizing the expertise of educators already present. Given the time constraints, they acknowledged the need for precise and time-efficient opportunities rather than long-term commitments.
- Bailey-White expressed her enthusiasm for the support provided by AmeriCorps in community outreach.
- Brown shared insights from a recent tour of a local prison, gaining a firsthand understanding of the dynamics of working within a library in such an institution and the challenges faced.

A participant loved the idea of a printed summary of the digital access plan. He wanted to know what top suggestion for a quick summary before print comes out. Bailey-White recommended the [Frontiers link](#) in the chat. She mentioned they hope the print will be out in 2-3 weeks.

A participant asked about the effectiveness of digital skills courses compared to the digital navigators program, seeking insights into the preference for one over the other and the benefits they offer. Brown shared that ongoing courses have seen limited success from the library's point of view. Libraries have increasingly turned to one-on-one sessions, which are more tailored to the individual's needs. She then invited Tina Barnett to share her experiences. Barnett mentioned that they have conducted multi-week courses, but it's challenging to engage the older adult population consistently. She has found success with one-on-one workshops and lectures, providing practice sessions on Wednesdays after classes. While acknowledging that one-on-one is ideal, it requires substantial staffing. Brown shared a link for more information: [Learn Idaho](#).

Smyer mentioned that the learn-to-earn model has had success. Learn-to-earn means that participants who enroll keep their laptop upon successful completion. They have seen a higher response to one-on-one.

Frances Goli, with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe, thanked the U of I extension and AmeriCorps. She has had an incredible experience. Idaho can be a leader for other states.

Brown discussed the ICfL [Connecting Communities Program](#). Guyton asked if we will be offering the program next year. Summerlin replied yes. Bailey-White mentioned it is a great model to include in your subgrant proposals and encouraged folks to consider it now.

Brown thanked everyone and ended the call at 12:30 p.m. MT.