



Please Embargo until September 7, 2022, 12:00 PM EST

Contact: Yvette Scorse, communications director, yvette@digitalinclusion.org

NDIA Awards 18 National Digital Navigator Corps Grants in Rural & Tribal Areas

COLUMBUS, OH - The National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) announced today 18 grant recipient organizations, who will together launch the National Digital Navigator Corps.

The grants are part of [\\$10 million of support from Google.org](#), which will go toward hiring community-based digital navigators alongside programmatic and technical support to further develop NDIA's digital navigator model for rural and Tribal communities. Digital navigators at the 18 selected sub-grantee organizations will help thousands of residents to gain much-needed access to the internet, devices, and digital skills training.

The grants, which total more than \$6.6 million, are for two-and-a-half year periods and range between \$320,540 and \$389,840 each, depending on the need and proposal.

"These grants are about more than just funding. By launching the National Digital Navigator Corps, we are extending the digital navigator model to areas of the United States lacking resources," said Angela Siefer, executive director of NDIA. "These digital navigators will open doors to thousands of residents to transform their lives by engaging in online opportunities, including education, workforce, citizen participation, and social activities."

Seven of the grantees are Tribal-led organizations and an additional three will serve Tribal communities with the grant. NDIA is partnering closely with AMERIND Critical Infrastructure to engage and support Tribal members of the National Digital Navigator Corps.

"The National Digital Navigator Corps will embed digital inclusion advocates across Indian Country," said Geoffrey Blackwell, chief strategy officer and general counsel of AMERIND. "This important strategy will address the breadth of inclusion needs where they occur – at home in Native communities – and will help our Tribal Nations take their rightful place in the world through the internet."

The 18 National Digital Navigator Corps grantees are:

- Alaska Federation of Natives, AK (Tribal-led)
- Cayuse Native Solutions, OR (Tribal-led)
- Cherokee Nation (Tribal-led)
- Community Broadband Action Network Corp, IA
- Community Service Programs of West Alabama, Inc., AL

- Computer Reach, PA
- Easter Seals of Greater Houston, Inc., TX
- Forest County Broadband Committee, WI (serving Tribal communities)
- Gila River Broadcasting Corporation: Digital Connect Initiative, AZ (Tribal-led)
- Hocking Athens Perry Community Action, OH
- Hoopa Valley Public Utilities District, CA (Tribal-led)
- Lummi Indian Business Council, WA (Tribal-led)
- National Digital Equity Center, ME (serving Tribal communities)
- Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission, OH
- Pottsboro Area Public Library, TX
- Pueblo of Jemez, NM (Tribal-led)
- Shaping Our Appalachian Region, Inc., KY
- Washington State University Extension Grays Harbor County, WA (serving Tribal communities)

Representatives from grantee organizations shared their reactions:

“Like many other Tribal communities, the Umatilla Reservation in northeastern Oregon experiences the digital divide in ways that affect our access to education, job opportunities, and generally keeping up with mainstream society. We do have some high-speed internet, but many areas of our community remain as internet-desolate pockets. Our Tribal government’s broadband team has done work to advance the Tribe’s opportunity for funds to help address these needs, but we are still many steps away from digital equity. We’re excited to bring NDIA’s wisdom to our community through the new National Digital Navigator Corps!” - Debra Crowell, President, Cayuse Native Solutions

“For distressed rural communities, the internet levels the playing field... but only if they know how to leverage it. We are excited to work closely with NDIA to increase active internet subscriptions, computing devices, and digital skills in six eastern Kentucky counties.” - Colby Hall, Executive Director, Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR)

“This collaboration will be significant to the rural communities of northwest Ohio and the people we serve. We look forward to supporting growth through access, education, and encouragement.” - Angie Franklin, Executive Director, Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission

###

About National Digital Inclusion Alliance: NDIA advances digital equity by supporting community programs and equipping policymakers to act. Working collaboratively with more than 850 digital inclusion practitioners, NDIA advocates for broadband access, tech devices, digital

skills training, and tech support. Please see more information and join the NDIA community at digitalinclusion.org.

About AMERIND Critical Infrastructure: Located on the Pueblo of Santa Ana in New Mexico – a federal enclave – AMERIND Critical Infrastructure (ACI) assists Tribes in planning, building, and financing modern community broadband networks designed to bring 21st century connectivity to their peoples. ACI is a division of AMERIND, a federally chartered and Tribal government-owned risk management company.

About Google.org: At Google.org, Google's philanthropy, we support nonprofits that address humanitarian issues and apply scalable, data-driven innovation to solving the world's biggest challenges. We accelerate their progress by connecting them with a unique blend of support that includes funding, resources, and technical expertise from Google volunteers. We engage with these believers-turned-doers who make a significant impact on the communities they represent, and whose work has the potential to produce meaningful change. We want a world that works for everyone—and we believe technology and innovation can move the needle.

What Is a Digital Navigator?: Digital navigators are trusted guides who assist community members in internet adoption and the use of computing devices. Digital navigation services include ongoing one-on-one assistance with affordable internet access, device acquisition, technical skills, and application support. The digital navigator model is a holistic, community-based, digital inclusion program established by NDIA and developed by the NDIA community of digital inclusion practitioners. See more information and resources at digitalinclusion.org/dn.