"Digital Divide" in Madison-2014
South Side/Latino Project Idea

The Issue:
Digital Divide: This is the gulf that exists, largely for socio-economic reasons, between those in Madison that have easy access to computers/internet and those that do not. In many ways this parallels other divides that exist in our community and nation and has been articulated in political races (John Edwards and "Two Americas") and more recently locally in Madison by community leaders, such as Reverend Alex Gee. While there is currently no hard, local data that correlates computer/internet access to socio-economic factors in Madison (next year MMSD will gather this information as students register), we know that nationally, low-income families – especially Latinos - typically have less access to these resources.

Nationally, poverty is strongly correlated with internet access. Every major survey has shown that the lower the income level, the less likely it is that households will subscribe to the internet. In fact the National Telecommunications and Information Administration reports that those household incomes earning $15,000 or less will have internet access 32% of the time while households earning $150,000 or more will have access 90% of the time. When it comes to Latinos, national studies report similar dismal statistics. Pew Research in 2010 noted, "Latinos are less likely than whites to access the internet, have a home broadband connection or own a cell phone (45% vs 65%)." The study also noted that Latinos lag behind African Americans in this regard. These disparities are significant, because there is a social importance in families having internet access. In today's world, finding and applying for jobs often takes place entirely online, students receive school assignments via email and basic government services are routinely offered online.

Latino Population in Madison:
In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in Madison of a predominatly impoverished Latino populaton. In past decades, members of the Latino community in Madison were often affiliated with the University as students, academic staff and faculty. More recently, the population has grown exponentially and is now comprised of a more working class community.. The Latino population has increased, according to the Census from 4.1% in 2000 to 6.9% in 2010. By now the population is estimated to have doubled. This increase is even more pronounced in certain neighborhoods and schools – particularly on the south side of Madison. The Latino population in some of these neighborhoods along the south beltline has doubled or tripled (census comparisons from 2000 and 2010, Allied Dunn's Marsh-7.9%-21.9%, Bram's Addition-12.7%-24.9%, Burr Oaks-24.7%-34%, Moorland-Rimrock-9.5%-25.9%). These numbers suggest on-going population growth that will continue in the coming years. .

In the schools, this trend in population growth continues to this day where Midvale/Lincoln's Latino school population is almost 40% and over half of the incoming kindergarten class at Leopold will be Latino. When looking at the overall district, in 1990 only 3.6% were Latino children in kindergarten as opposed to 2012 when the percentage was 21%. Concurrently, the corresponding poverty rate of this MMSD population has also increased during this same time span (2000-present) increasing from 27.6% to 50%.

There are inadequacies in service provision for Latinos in Madison. Part of this is no doubt due to the spike in population growth noted above of low-income Latinos and the inability of service provision to match the rate of population growth. The last decade has witnessed formal (Centro Hispano, Catholic Multicultural Services, Latino Academy of Workforce Development, Latino Chamber, etc.) and informal (various sub committees of La Sup – Latino Health Council, Latino Education Council, etc.) organizational growth in an attempt to keep up with the need for services. Madison now has good service providers that are stressed to the limit and in need of more resources to respond to the growing needs of the community.

We believe that the Latino community and broader Madison is at a tipping point. The increase in working class Latinos in our city is undeniable as is the corresponding demand for services. We have a choice. The future could be embraced as a positive, enriching proposition that is more diverse, vital and with all having a economic "seat at the table". Or the future could be less attractive, with economically struggling populaitons with lower incomes, racially segregated neighborhoods and underachieving schools. The smart choice is to invest a small amount of resources up front to aid and abet Latino organizations that want to join forces for a common goal and facilitate families moving into the middle class.

Coalition Response:
Coalition Members:
- Centro Hispano – Coordinating agency and contract recipient
- Omega
- Catholic Multicultural Center (CMC)
- Latino Chamber of Commerce
- Latino Academy of Workforce Development (LAWD)
- DANEnet
- Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD)
- Badger Advanced Technologies
- Center for Community Technology Solutions – UW Extension (UW)

Coalition Response:
The coalition is requesting $75,000 in its response to this RFP. Centro Hispano would be the grant recipient for the coalition and coordinate the disbursement of funds for the project. There are several major elements encompassed in the coalition's response to this RFP.

1. This proposal aims at addressing the "Digital Divide" by expanding the **access** of customers to the internet and computers. How far that expansion goes is of course partially dependent on the amount of resources contained in the bid and variables pertaining to how easily expansion can occur. The approach will: utilize existing infrastructure and delivery system, add system upgrades to improve delivery at key Latino community partnership locations in Madison (Centro Hispano, CMC, LAWD and Omega), use a combination of technologies that include fiber and wireless radios to build off of these community locations, expand access to key community locations for computer/internet access and create community approaches to learning about technology (at community agencies, at community events, tech clubs, etc.).

2. This is a **"south side"** proposal in that the clients and organizations that will be impacted by this proposal are all geographically located on Madison's south side. LAWD is located on Bridge/Lake Pointe on the southeast side of Madison and Centro, Latino Chamber, Omega and CMC are all located in the Park Street area of the south side.

3. The south side of Madison and certainly the populations served by these organizations are primarily **low-income** families or individuals. One indicator of poverty level in this community, which we can rely on, is looking at MMSD statistics of families that qualify for free and reduced lunch in the neighborhoods that our agencies serve. The overall poverty rate of MMSD has gone from 20.3% in 1991 to 50.0% in 2013. A snap shot of Midvale/Lincoln schools (the schools are paired) further demonstrates this poverty where at Midvale (K-2nd) 61% are low-income and at Lincoln (3rd-5th), 68.2% are low-income. Meeting the schools. While children attend both schools, most of the Latino families live near Lincoln on the south side. The Bram's Addition and Burr Oaks neighborhood statistics (the Lincoln school area) also reflect more younger, lower income, single head of household and minorityresidents than the rest of the city.

4. Expanded internet access will serve a variety of ethnicities in south Madison, but the agencies involved do collectively serve higher numbers of **Latinos**. As noted earlier, these individuals are largely low-income, have limited English speaking ability and may need enhanced workforce skills, language skills, adult education, post secondary degrees, basic and other services. This population continues to grow citywide and in certain neighborhoods makes up one third of the neighborhood's families. What is also true is the great potential this population represents for Madison and their collective interest to prosper and be a part of our community. This population needs to have access to and utilize the tools necessary to become economically mobile in Madison.

5. This initiative will increase and improve **access** to these organizations and their buildings. These organizations already are heavily utilized by the public and it is

anticipated that new opportunities will be created for the public to access internet/computers onsite.

6. It is the intent of this proposal to **improve the internet access of these organizations** first and to then expand internet access point to point depending on what technology is advisable (fiber, wireless radios, combination of the two) and guided by where there is the greatest potential for high concentrations of users (apartment complexes vs single family homes, etc.).

7. Computers and accessing the internet is increasingly **woven into the programing** of these agencies and this will only increase in the coming years. The programing includes but is not limited to: small business classes, workforce development, ESL/GED, basic needs and youth services. Our initiative will promote the growth of this type of programming, as well as additional programing for youth and adults that may need literacy in how to not just have access to internet technology, but how it may be a utilized as a tool that is personally beneficial to them and their future.

8. This is a **coalition of partners** on the south side of Madison that know the needs of the communities they serve (Centro alone serves over 5,000 adults & youth per year and CMC records over 35,000 units of service annually) which are in turn paired with organizations that bring the needed technological expertise. Both worlds need to be part of this conversation and are present in this proposal. We believe this is an effective public/private collaboration. It is also important that this coalition has reached out to the University and MMSD and included them in our partnership. This proposal will seek whatever assistance the UW can provide in terms of expertise, resources and outreach to the adult population. We have also had initial contacts with MMSD in order to determine how this proposal would mesh with their larger IT plan as it is rolled out as well as how to collaborate with Lincoln school on the south side of Madison.

9. This pilot can be **easily started and easily expanded** and be part of a larger south side plan. For example, Centro Hispano could have fiber by connecting to the adjacent south side police precinct. Likewise, for Omega to have fiber means connecting across the street to the fire station on Badger. This builds off of the Metropolitan Unified Fiber Network (MUFN). One of our partners (Badger Advanced Technologies) has already devoted time (The Madison Dream Project) and thought into how to provide high quality internet connection on the south side of Madison. This pilot could be the first step of a larger plan.

Program Outcomes:
1. Identifying populations that are most in need and do not currently have access to computers/internet.
2. Increasing access of computers/internet to these families/individuals.
3. Increase the number of students that have access to computers/internet.
4. Increase computer/internet literacy.

5. Utilize improved access to computers/internet to improve community programing and services.
6. Increase in the number of internet devices in the area.
7. Improved programming to customers the agencies serve.