

CLEVELAND, OHIO

“We are recruiting and partnering with some of the nation’s brightest organizations to ensure we create true digital equity in broadband access.”

- **Katie Grootegoed**, Director of Sales, Customer Experience and Engagement, DigitalC



A diverse set of local partners leveraged the Internet connectivity outreach efforts to provide valuable information on healthcare, education, and workforce development to residents.

Out of the 80 US cities with 100,000 or more households, Cleveland has the highest percentage without broadband access. Organizations across the region recognized the need to recruit new stakeholders to address the problem, and DigitalC used the opportunity in Project OVERCOME to attract resources and build momentum for a more connected and equitable city.

The need for connectivity across underserved Cleveland communities was evident at community outreach events. During one event, kids dragged their mom to DigitalC’s information desk and pushed her to sign up for an affordable home Internet connection. They were tired of relying on Wi-Fi at a fast food restaurant or the library to complete their homework.

Initially, DigitalC’s connectivity plan through Project OVERCOME called for using millimeter wave (mmWave) technology to provide broadband service to low-income residents in the Lexington Village Apartment complex. However, plans changed when local permitting issues prohibited using the route necessary to connect the equipment to electrical power. The plans for the mmWave equipment were saved for another neighborhood, and the team pivoted to a private LTE over CBRS solution for broadband access.

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Community outreach events allowed DigitalC to educate residents about the features of the different types of wireless technologies.



Digital literacy events hosted by the affordable housing partners helped increase the use of the Internet among residents.

About 30% of those connected by DigitalC have received adoption and training support through either digital clinics or one-on-one training. Training builds up technical skills and fosters trust with residents who may need to seek out additional resources. For example, Stephanie, a mother who completed computer training, now attends various other digital workshops and avidly advocates for more training events, particularly ones that offer educational resources for children.

DigitalC's work through Project OVERCOME and other digital equity initiatives led the organization to secure \$20 million from two local foundations to help them continue working toward closing the digital divide.



GRANTEE AND PARTNERS

DigitalC, Millennia Housing Management, Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Cuyahoga County, MetroHealth, Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland Public Library, and Case Western Reserve University