

Access Humboldt Knight Community Information Toolkit 2012 Implementation Project Report

Background and Context

Access Humboldt (AH) <http://accesshumboldt.net> is a non-profit community broadband and media access organization operating a community media center on the campus of Eureka High School. AH formally represents and advocates on behalf of local government jurisdictions and community anchor institutions, provides training and other services related to digital media production, as well as managing four Humboldt County community access TV channels. As lead agency for the award-winning Digital Redwoods initiative <http://digitalredwoods.net>, Access Humboldt is developing a community-based network of dedicated fiber and wireless broadband connections and working with other regional groups to support deployment and adoption of high-speed broadband access for North Coast communities.

Since 2009, Access Humboldt has embraced the conclusions and recommendations of the Knight Commission's report "Informing Communities: Sustaining Democracy in the Digital Age" and the framework developed by the Knight Commission was incorporated in the strategic plans of Access Humboldt. In 2010, Executive Director Sean McLaughlin joined the Media Policy Initiative at New America Foundation as a Knight Media Policy Fellow, a role that continues in 2012.

In 2012, local community-based efforts of AH were developing across a range of activities to address the supply of local information, to improve digital media literacy and production skills, and to build capacity of local infrastructure for digital media - through broadband network deployment and sustainable adoption programs.

POLICY

Community outreach, advocacy and policy engagement are a substantial focus for Access Humboldt. AH is directly engaged with local, state and federal policy efforts to help meet the information needs of local communities. Historically, for community TV organizations this process has been grounded through cable franchise authorities' oversight. Sadly, due to industry backed (ALEC) legislation at the State level, counties and cities have been losing their jurisdiction over cable providers, so local needs ascertainment have been severely curtailed. For AH, Knight's Community Information Toolkit provided an abbreviated methodology to inform community participation regarding cable TV franchising and broadcast licensing.

County of Humboldt is the first County jurisdiction in California to draft a distinct Telecommunications Element in the proposed General Plan revisions. Final action on the General Plan revision is pending. The local public deliberations of this Element, at County Planning Commission and County Board of Supervisors open meetings, have provided an excellent opportunity to illuminate the "information ecosystem" framework and to specifically promote the recommendations of the Knight Commission.

Similarly, participation of Access Humboldt's executive director in State policy - at the Legislature, the California Broadband Council (serving on working group for local governments), and the California Public Utilities Commission (serving on California Teleconnect Fund - Administrative Committee) - has provided opportunities to surface the Knight Commission's findings and recommendations and to inform policymakers about the need for sustainable community information ecosystems.

OUTREACH

Sunshine Week and Freedom of Information Day are important annual events for Access Humboldt. These activities reflect some of the basic values and principles framed in the Knight Commission's recommendations. <http://accesshumboldt.net/site/sunshine-week-and-foi-day>

In 2012, AH hosted a workshop on "How to Run a Successful Media Campaign" with Adam Klugman, a

benefit dinner event to celebrate "Community Voices," and a "Sunshine Week Forum: Future of Broadcast News" that featured local media leaders, including: Roy Frostenson, General Manager, KIEM TV News Channel 3; Terri Klemetson, News Coordinator, KMUD Redwood Community Radio; Brian Papstein, President, Eureka Broadcasting Co.; Tom Sebourn, Operations Manager and Program Director, Bi-Coastal Media; and, Ed Subkis, General Manager, KHSU-FM (NPR affiliate).

<http://accesshumboldt.net/site/access-humboldt-celebrates-sunshine-week>

In addition to Sunshine Week and the Info Toolkit implementation, AH also hosted other outreach activities in 2012, a "Local Filmmakers Night" series, a "Eureka Idea Jam - Mozilla IGNITE" event and more. In diverse situations from industry promotion to next generation innovation, the framework of the Knight Commission recommendations has proven adaptable and helpful in our community.

INFORMATION & REFERRAL 2-1-1

During 2012, Humboldt County is in the process of launching a new 2-1-1 information and referral service. Access Humboldt participates in the Steering Committee for 2-1-1 Humboldt - "In addition to growing and maintaining a database of some 2,800 community resources, The Switchboard [2-1-1 predecessor] established collaborative relationships and funding partnerships with many local agencies to provide specialized pre-screening and referrals for housing, food assistance free tax assistance, and services for families and young children" - <http://www.unitedwaywinecountry.org/node/347>. On November 29, 2012 the California Public Utilities Commission authorized the new 2-1-1 Humboldt service that will launch in early 2013. The design and development of local 2-1-1 service has been an exciting new opportunity for AH to apply the Knight Commission framing to address information needs of communities - very timely for this effort to benefit from the implementation of the Info Toolkit!

NEXT GENERATION

Youth programs are important part of AH's overall education and training efforts <http://accesshumboldt.net/site/youth>. In 2010, AH was invited to participate in "Generation ZeroDivide" a youth media project of ZeroDivide that includes seven youth media partners in six states (funded in part by ARRA-BTOP broadband stimulus funding). "GenZD" provides support for outreach to remote rural communities in our region <http://accesshumboldt.net/site/generation-zerodivide>.

Most notably, our youth outreach efforts adopted some of the Community Information Toolkit design concepts and applied them in remote rural communities. Take a look at the Real Life/Research Lab <http://reallife.accesshumboldt.net/> materials we developed that include network maps for the information ecosystem the youth identified - esp. at Dream Quest in Willow Creek http://reallife.accesshumboldt.net/?page_id=9 and Klamath River Early College of the Redwoods (KRECR) in Klamath http://reallife.accesshumboldt.net/?page_id=55.

Knight Community Information Toolkit - Implementation

TOOLKIT LAUNCH

AH used the Toolkit Roadmap to plan a launch event that we called "The Human Network." This invitation meeting of community leaders was convened on April 12, 2012 at Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center, Eureka, CA. In addition to AH Board members and staff, eighteen (18) attendees helped to identify the next circle of community leaders who should be enlisted to develop a sustainable community information ecosystem for Humboldt County. A list of participants is included in attached documents.

The Human Network meeting included perspectives of important stakeholders who are already at the community information table in Humboldt County - including non-profit health & public service organizations, public education providers from P-20+, media and local government agencies - esp. Native communities, as well as County of Humboldt and local cities. Guided discussions and feedback gathered at The Human Network meeting helped AH to identify gaps that need to be addressed over time to help

build deeper and sustainable connections across diverse groups in the wider community.

GATHER DATA, SYNTHESIZE INSIGHTS AND PLAN FOR ACTION

The central convening for this project was the "Future of Community Information" Workshop on July 17, 2012. In addition to Heather Equinoss with Humboldt Area Foundation, Sean McLaughlin who co-facilitated the workshop and several AH staff, twenty (20) attendees participated in a very focused and guided series of discussions. A detailed outline for the workshop is included with this report.

Five different target populations were identified for small group consideration: deaf / vision impaired; government and educational institutions; Northern Humboldt region; users with limited access (low income, rural, etc.); and, policymakers. For each group, participants considered opportunities and challenges and discussed strengths and weaknesses of supply, skills and infrastructure.

Then, participants in the Workshop stepped back together to look across all the groups to consider a common vision for supply, skills and infrastructure including the challenges that need to be addressed to accomplish the vision, to identify who needs to be involved, and to outline a plan for action - ending with immediate next steps.

Notes reporting the discussion and findings are included with this report - organized in two parts, "Getting Started" and "Moving Forward."

COLLABORATION WITH PEER ORGANIZATIONS

The Info Toolkit implementation process offered a useful and supportive framework to focus on common needs and interests to develop a healthy information ecosystem. The activities and process significantly increased the scope and diversity of ongoing collaboration among public, education and government organizations developing community media across Humboldt County.

SCORECARD DATA

Scorecard data was gathered and uploaded - print out for Humboldt County is included in this report.

PROCESS FEEDBACK

Access Humboldt's implementation of the Info Toolkit was a natural extension of ongoing efforts to meet the organization's mission. The process allowed for sufficient flexibility to weave the implementation into County-wide work to develop community broadband and media access services for public, education and government purposes. For Access Humboldt, the insights and findings of this effort will effectively inform local advocacy, innovative collaborations, broadband network deployments for community anchor institutions, and sustainable broadband media adoption projects across the region.

DOCUMENT SHARING & MARKETING MATERIALS

Documents included with this report include:

- "The Human Network" and "Future of Community Information" workshop participant lists
- Access Humboldt // Future of Community Information - Workshop Agenda (draft 3)
- "The Future of Community Information," July 17, 2012 Workshop - Getting Started & Moving Forward
- Community Information Scorecard - Humboldt County, CA

Press Release: "Future of Community Information - Workshop held"

<http://accesshumboldt.net/site/future-community-information-workshop-held>

Photo: <http://accesshumboldt.net/site/files/AH%20Knight%20workshop%20July%202012.jpg>

Photo caption, from left to right: Laura Olson (California Endowment), Eileen McGee (youth media instructor/independent filmmaker), Katie Whiteside (KHSU-FM), and Zuretti Goosby (local representative for State Senator Noreen Evans) attended the Future of Community Information workshop on July 17, 2012 hosted by Access Humboldt at Humboldt Area Foundation.