

According to a June 2007 “Home Broadband Adoption” study by the Pew Internet & American Life Project, while 47% of all adult Americans have a broadband connection at home, only 15% of individuals 65 or older have broadband access. 40% of individuals 50-64 have broadband but have been slower in adopting broadband since 2005 than younger age groups. Yet, increasingly, access to informational resources, pursuit of activities to maintain independence in daily living and the ability to actively participate in our society, require mastery of technology and usage of the Internet. SeniorNet is committed to working with funders, community groups and other partners to close this Digital Divide for seniors, especially those with disabilities and those in urban and rural underserved areas, through our “Underserved Initiative” which provides hands-on, peer-taught, training as well as web-based education and online community support.

Native American Achievement Centers



In partnership with the Native American Chamber of Commerce and with funding from IBM, SeniorNet is leading the technology training components of ‘Hope and Harmony for Humanity’, a grant-based initiative designed to bring computer technology access and education to low-income and remote Native American reservations across the nation.

The initiative began with the opening of the first Achievement Center at the [Blackfeet Nation](#) in Browning, Montana on September 28, 2006. The next center opening was on June 28, 2007 at the

[Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe](#)

in Cass Lake, Minnesota. The

[Tigua Achievement Center at Ysleta del Sur Pueblo](#)

in El Paso, TX opened on August 21, 2007. The

[Houlton Maliseet Achievement Center in Maine](#)

opened on April 24, 2008.

The

[Catawba Achievement Center](#)

in South Carolina opened on September 12, 2008.

The Lenovo PC-based Achievement Centers offer computer and Internet access, education and training at all levels for reservation residents of all ages. In addition to computer training that covers the fundamentals through more advanced courses, the Achievement Centers serve as an education center for the communities, offering intergenerational programs and classes on topics such as Family History and Genealogy, Health, Language Training, Work Skills, and Tutoring, as well as a host of life skills and enrichment curriculum for the community’s residents.

This initiative will continue its development through 2008 with the opening of a total of five Achievement Centers on rural and low-income reservations. SeniorNet is working to acquire additional scholarship funding to continue the program and build new centers throughout the country.

Underserved Urban Learning Centers Thanks to a partnership with the H.R.C. Foundation, SeniorNet opened three scholarship-based Computer Learning Centers in low-income, urban communities between 2006 and 2008. The first of these Centers opened at [Emmaus Services for the Aging in Washington, D.C.](#) on October 18, 2006. The second opened on January 25, 2008 in [New Orleans](#), Louisiana. The most recent H.R.C. Learning Center opened in [Chula Vista](#), California on June 17, 2008.

Funded by a grant from the UPS Foundation, SeniorNet opened two additional fully-funded Learning Centers that provide free computer access and education to low-income older adults. The first of these Centers opened in 2006 in [Oakland, California at the Eastmont Town Center](#). The second opened in 2007 in the greater [Corpus Christi, Texas](#) area.

SeniorNet is actively looking for additional grants to continue to develop and support new scholarship Learning Centers throughout the U.S.