**Illinois Connected Digital Equity Summit
Full Agenda with Speakers**

Day 1 // Wednesday, May 8 | (1:00–4:30pm)

1:00pm Arrivals / Registration

1:30-4:30pm Digital Equity Workshops (Facilitated Peer Working Groups)

Sub-Track A: Digital Equity Practitioners
Facilitators: Abi Waldrupe, Pamela Rosales

Digital Inclusion Essentials: Pamela Rosales (Abi Waldrupe)
Gain a deeper understanding of the strategies to advance digital equity in communities. The session will provide a robust foundation of the different aspects of digital inclusion and digital equity. This interactive session includes information on digital inclusion barriers, programs, coalitions, policy, and funding.

Break - 15 minutes

Digital Navigator Training: Abi Waldrupe (Pamela Rosales, Vicky Yuki)
Digital Navigators address the whole digital inclusion process - home connectivity, appropriate devices, and digital skills training/referral. Interactive informational session about the digital navigator program model, tools, and communities of practice. Discover best practices, critical aptitudes, workflow methods, and outreach strategies learned from a wide community of digital navigator programs nationwide. We'll explore ways in which the digital navigator model has been adapted for specific audiences, client success stories, and the actionable tools that can help you build or expand your own digital navigator program. Topics include: Overview of the DN Model & training components; Tools & resources; Peer exchange opportunities; Troubleshooting and Resources.

Sub-Track B: DE Program Directors / Managers
Facilitators: Kristi Zappie-Ferradino, Amy Huffman

<u>Preparing for Digital Equity Funding and Sustainability</u> - Amy Huffman (Kristi Zappie-Ferradino)
> This session provides an overview of opportunities and practical insights on accessing funding to pursue community-driven solutions.

Break - 15 minutes

<u>Creating and Managing Digital Navigator Programs</u> - Kristi Zappie-Ferradino (Amy Huffman)
> Strategic guidance on how to set up and launch a digital navigator program.

Day 2 // Thursday, May 9 | (8:00am–5:00pm + Reception)

8:00-9:00am Registration and Breakfast

9:00-9:10am Plenary/Welcome
> Speakers*:* **Devon Braunstein**, Acting Director, Illinois Office of Broadband
> **Matt Schmit,** Senior Director, Illinois Broadband Lab

9:10-9:40am Plenary Fireside Chat/Illinois' DEA and BEAD Implementation
> Moderator: **Angela Siefer**, Executive Director, NDIA
> Guest: **Matt Schmit,** Senior Director, Illinois Broadband Lab

> One of the nation's pioneering advocates for digital equity will sit down with Illinois' broadband chief to discuss how the state plans to leverage a generational federal investment in high-speed internet connectivity. They will cover the new opportunities the state hopes to unleash as well as what local governments, internet providers and community stakeholders that want to be part of the process should expect in the months and years ahead.

9:40-10:00am Lightning Round
> This series of dynamic short 3-minute presentations will give attendees local snapshots of the excellent work being done around Illinois to increase access to broadband and increase digital literacy, and the exciting results they're seeing.

> 1. **Briana Washington**, Community Organizer, Southwest Organizing Project
> 2. **Caroline Sanchez Crozier,** CEO/Founder, LatinX Digital Leaders Now
> 3. **Xandi Wright,** Founder & Educator, Wright to Learn
> 4. **Lucas Stark,** Assistant Manager, Champaign County Farm Bureau
> 5. **Gage McCallister**, Community Impact Manager, PCs for People

10:00-10:30am – Break

10:30-11:15am Morning Breakout Sessions 1

Digital Equity Track

Building Awareness of Your Digital Equity Program
Moderator: **Jill Gottfred-Sohoni,** Principal Consultant, Circle Root Collaborative
Panelists:
- **Kyla Williams Tate,** Director of Digital Equity, Cook County Government Cook County & Fellow, Benton Institute for Broadband & Society
- **Daniel Anello,** Chief Executive Officer, KidsFirst Chicago
- **Argelia Martinez,** Marketing Communications Advisor, Vida Mia
- **Anne Slaughter,** Director of Technology Services, RAILS

Public education, building awareness, and engagement are critical to the success of digital inclusion programs. Learn field-tested strategies to communicate and tell your stories of impact effectively. This panel will focus on telling your story, with best practices and tips to engage with your audiences to ensure that the right people know about the work you're doing in your community.

Deployment Track

Connect Illinois Broadband Grantee Showcase
Moderator: **Matt Schmit** Senior Director, Illinois Broadband Lab
Panelists:
- **Susan Hamilton** Vice President, Grafton Technology, Inc.
- **Cameron McCurdy** ProTek Communications
- **Barry Adair** CEO/GM, Wabash Telephone Cooperative
- **Sean McCarthy,** VP of Business Development & Strategic Initiatives, Comcast

Illinois was one of the first states to make a major commitment to closing the digital divide with a significant public investment to help achieve universal broadband access. We will talk to recipients of Connect Illinois grant funds about how they initiated broadband expansion efforts prior to the recent federal funding boost, and how they've been successful in implementing projects.

11:15-12:00 Morning Breakout Sessions 2

Digital Equity Track

Building Community-Based Partnerships and Coalitions
Moderator: **Angela Siefer,** Executive Director NDIA
Panelists:
- **Candace Browdy,** Executive Director, Connect Lake County
- **Dwayne Douglas**, CEO, QUILT Corp
- **Mary Gay**, former American Connection Corps Fellow, SWIL

This session will also include information on building partnerships and coalitions to support

your digital inclusion work. It will consist of strategies from community-based partners and digital inclusion coalitions on how to build relationships with community partners to address digital inequities successfully and highlights NDIA's Digital Inclusion Coalition Guidebook.

Deployment Track

By the People, For the People: Community-Led Broadband Planning
Moderator: **Robbie McBeath**, Visiting Senior Coordinator for Broadband, Illinois Broadband Lab
Panelists:
- **Christina Burns**, County Administrator, Kendall County
- **Gary Camarano**, Director, Whiteside County Economic Development
- **Susan Young**, Board Trustee, Village of Elsah
- **Josh Barringer**, Computing Services Manager, Jackson County IT Director

As the release of federal broadband infrastructure funds to states approaches later this year, urgency is building for communities to develop local plans - based on their unique needs - for getting residents connected. This session will walk through the essential elements of effective community broadband planning using the experiences of several Illinois counties that have gone through the process and are on the path to implementing funded projects.

12:00-12:45pm Lunch & Networking in Salon V

1:00-1:45pm Afternoon Breakout Sessions 3

Digital Equity Track

Practitioner Perspectives: Practical Tips to Advance Digital Equity with Covered Populations
Moderator: **Vicky Yuki**, Senior Programs Manager, NDIA
Panelists:
- **Reyna Rodriquez**, Digital Learning Program Manager, Northwest Center
- **Karen Tamley**, President & CEO Access Living
- **Marc Archambeau,** Instructor/IT Liason, St. Leonard's Ministries
- **Stephanie Burnett**, Director of Move to Work, Housing Authority of Champaign County

Community organizations and anchor institutions that provide digital inclusion services must comprehensively understand community needs to provide services catered to the needs of program participants. Together, panelists will share their digital equity program efforts, core lessons, and key takeaways to inform others working with covered populations. The Digital Equity Act defines covered populations as individuals whose incomes are below 150% of the poverty level, aging individuals (60+), incarcerated individuals not in a Federal correctional facility, veterans, individuals with disabilities, individuals with a language barrier, Individuals who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group, and individuals who primarily reside in a rural area.

Deployment Track

Broadband Breakthrough: Empowering Advancements in Rural Communities
Moderator: **Todd Main**, Director of Market Development, Illinois Soybean Association
Panelists:
- **John Kostelnick**, GEOMAP Director and Professor of Geography, Illinois State University
- **Schuyler Isley**, Executive Director, Schuyler County Economic Development
- **Bill Bodine,** Director of Business and Regulatory Affairs, Illinois Farm Bureau

To stay competitive in today's global economy, rural residents – including farmers and ranchers – need access to high-speed internet for everything from maximizing efficiency in the field, to learning and developing skills, to finding and communicating with customers. In this session we will look at the unique gaps and opportunities in less-populated areas and explore an innovative collaboration in Illinois called Broadband Breakthrough that is helping deploy broadband networks anchored in the needs of rural communities.

1:45-2:30pm Afternoon Breakout Sessions 4

Digital Equity Track

Falling through the Cracks: Why Digital Equity is a "must have" in marginalized communities
Moderator: **Aneta T Lee**, Visiting Assistant Director for Digital Equity, Inclusion, and Navigation, Illinois Broadband Lab
Panelists:
- **Alejandra Sanchez**, Digital Navigator, Latinx Digital Leaders Now
- **Grace Chan McKibben,** Executive Director, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community
- **Dr. Maggie Riveria**, President/CEO, Illinois Migrant Council
- **Alicia Ross**, Community Engagement Manger, Illinois Office of Broadband

This session will explore the intersection between digital inequity and racial inequity. Participants will hear from community leaders providing programs and services in their respective ethnic communities and how the digital divide poses 21st-century challenges and barriers to advancement.

Deployment Track

Make Every Dollar Count: Funding Local Broadband Expansion
Moderator: **Joanne Hovis**, President, CTC Energy & Technology
Panelists:
- **Sean Stokes**, Partner, Keller & Heckman
- **Christopher Mitchell**, Director, Community Broadband Networks, Institute for Local Self Reliance
- **Eze Phil-Ebosie**, Director of Engineering, ComEd
- **Michael Pegues**, Chief Information Officer, City of Aurora

The options for funding local broadband networks are as varied as the communities that still lack high-speed modern internet service. We will talk to experts about how to identify potential funding streams and determine the best investment structure for meeting a community's particular needs and circumstances.

2:30-3:00pm – Break

3:00-3:45pm Afternoon Plenary

Campuses as Connectors
Moderator: **Jay Walsh**, Vice President for Economic Development and Innovation, University of Illinois System
Panelists:
- **Connie Frey Spurlock,** Director, SIUE Office of Community Engagement
- **Todd Kleine,** Chief Information Officer, Dominican University
- **Nathalia Cardenas,** Project Manager, Chicago State University

Universities serve as critical regional economic drivers. In Illinois, state broadband planners are leveraging the higher education system to nurture hubs of expertise and innovation around broadband access, adoption, and utilization. We will hear from members of the state's college and university community about how their institutions are leading digital equity efforts in their regions.

3:45-4:30pm Afternoon Plenary

New Needs, New Opportunities: Broadband Expansion and Workforce Development
Moderator: **Jeannette Tamayo**, Associate Vice President for Workforce Development & Community Engagement, University of Illinois System
Panelists:
- **Rachel Unruh**, Chief of External Affairs, National Skills Council
- **Laura Bailey,** Director of Operations, Phalanx Family Services
- **Kelly Lapetino**, Office of Employment & Training, DCEO
- **Scott Connelly,** Vice President of Academic Affairs, Morrison Institute of Technology

The promise of universal broadband access has major implications for the workforce. How do we ensure there are enough skilled workers to expand our infrastructure on the pace that's needed? How do we make sure there is adequate support for new internet networks and subscribers? How will expanded broadband access and digital literacy advance broader workforce needs and goals? We will dig into these questions and the potential answers with a group that spans the demand and supply ends of the spectrum.

4:30-5:00pm Closing Plenary

The Long View

Moderator:
- Angela Siefer, Executive Director, NDIA

The broadband funding included in the Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Law is the largest-ever single federal investment in connectivity, and is not likely to be matched for generations to come. We will explore what promises universal connectivity holds for solving a range of entrenched and costly challenges, and how we can make sure the benefits of this record investment can be felt in communities that need them most over the long-term.

5:00-6:00pm – Free | Buses to Navy Pier start loading at 5:30pm

6:00-8:00pm Reception & Program at Offshore Rooftop at Navy Pier

We All Have a Stake in Our Connected Future
Moderator: **Angela Siefer**, Executive Director, NDIA
Panelists:
- **Angie Cooper**, Executive Vice President, Heartland Forward
- **Dennis Devine**, President & CEO, Alliant Credit Union
- **John Atkinson,** Chairman, Intersect Illinois
- **Juliana Gonzalez-Crussi**, Executive Director, Center for Changing Lives
- **Calmetta Coleman,** Chief Operating Officer, Chicago Urban League

Our region's success in reaching economic growth and equity goals depends on having a connected and digitally literate public – that includes workers and consumers. Record investments from the federal and state government are a critical step in the right direction, but it will take a wide array of stakeholders working together to get where we want to go. Discussion with leading IL corporate and philanthropic leaders

Day 3 // Friday, May 10 | (9:00am–12:00pm)

8:00–9:00am – Breakfast

9:00am–12:00pm Workshops

Deployment Track

Community Role In Broadband Deployment
Presenter: **Joanne Hovis**, President, CTC

Examples Of Local Collaboration
Moderator: **Joanne Hovis**, President, CTC
Panelists:
- **Jennifer Doody**, Executive Director, Alton Forward
- **Michael Smeltzer**, Principal Investigator & Instigator, UC2B
- **Paul Hixson,** 2024 Co-Chair, UC2B
- **Brian Olson,** Chief Business Development Officer, i3 Broadband

Conditions For Local Collaboration
Moderator: **Joanne Hovis**, President, CTC
Panelists:
- **Kristy Szabo**, Director of Consulting, Vantage Point Solutions
- **Sean Stokes**, Partner, Keller Heckman
- **Christopher Mitchell**, Director, Community Broadband Networks, Institute for Local Self Reliance

Aligning For Local Coordination
Moderator: **Christopher Mitchell**, Director, Community Broadband Networks, Institute for Local Self Reliance
Panelists:
- **Josh Shallenberger**, President & CEO, Shelby Electric Cooperative
- **Mary Gay**, former American Connection Corps Fellow, SWIL

Preparing For Bead
Presenter: **Jon Wilkins**, Partner and Co-Founder, Quadra Partners

Audience Discussion & Next Steps
Moderator: Christopher Mitchell, Director, Community Broadband Networks, Institute for Local Self Reliance
Panelists:
- **Joanne Hovis**, President, CTC
- **Jon Wilkins,** Partner and Co-Founder, Quadra Partners

Research Track

Seizing Research Opportunities in Our Current Moment
Moderator: **Caroline Stratton**, Senior Research & Data Manager, NDIA
Panelists:
- **Christina Biedny**, Senior Analyst, Economics & Advisory, AECOM
- **John Kostelnick**, GEOMAP Director and Professor of Geology, Illinois State University
- **Micaelan Gasperich**, Research Data Analyst, Kids First Chicago
- **Colin Rhinesmith,** Director, Metro University

Grant Recipients' Perspectives on Research
Moderator: **Caroline Stratton**, Senior Research & Data Manager, NDIA
Panelists:
- **Anne Deeter,** Executive Director of Planning, Grants, & Foundation Relations, Dominican University
- **Chieh-Li "Julian" Chin,** University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- **Evan Allgood,** University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- **Jorge Rojas Alvarez**, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
- **Connie Frey-Spurlock**, Director, SIUE Office of Community Engagement
- **Carrie Butts-Wilmsmeyer**, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Maximizing Research Returns from BEAD and DEA Investments
Moderator: **Caroline Stratton**, Senior Research & Data Manager, NDIA

Panelists:
- **John Horrigan**, Senior Fellow, Benton Institute for Broadband and Society
- **Alexis Schrubbe**, Director of the Internet Equity Initiative, University of Chicago
- **Scott Wallsten**, President, Technology Policy Institute

12:00pm – Adjourn