

Monterey Bay Economic Partnership Supports Community Efforts to Improve Digital Literacy

MBEP and its partner Loaves, Fishes & Computers have made significant strides to close the digital divide in the tri-county region.

MARINA, CA, UNITED STATES, December 24, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Technology empowers communities, and a partnership between [Monterey Bay Economic Partnership](#) (MBEP) and MBEP member organization [Loaves, Fishes & Computers](#) (LFC) has made powerful strides this year in closing the digital divide in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties.



We're thrilled at the success of this collaboration and underscore the powerful impact tools such as digital access and digital skills have in uplifting our regional economy."

*Tahra Goraya, Monterey Bay Economic Partnership
President and CEO*

In late 2023, MBEP helped LFC secure two [California Advanced Services Fund \(CASF\) Adoption Account](#) grants. That funding helped the organization launch additional outreach to improve access and adoption of digital literacy skill-building across San Benito, Santa Cruz, and Monterey counties. Working in collaboration with Monterey Bay Economic Partnership for technical and administrative

assistance, new community workshops helped further close the digital divide, getting computing devices into the hands of low-income residents and helping them acquire the digital fluency skills to use them effectively.

MBEP's partnership with LFC is just one example of how MBEP works behind the scenes to bring much-needed funding and advocacy to close the digital divide in our region. Because of those funds, Loaves, Fishes and Computers was able to complete 303 digital literacy courses for residents of the tri-county region, distribute 550 computer devices, serve a total of 528 residents through digital literacy courses, and provide tech support for 400 seniors.

The Advancing the Community with Digital Equity project focused on improving access and adoption of digital literacy skill-building in San Benito, Santa Cruz, and Monterey counties. Classes in Hollister, Gonzales, Castroville, Greenfield, King City, Marina, Salinas, Soledad, and Seaside ensured that participants could access quality computing devices, learn digital skills and internet safety, and find out how to acquire low-cost broadband connectivity. They were also provided with new and refurbished Chromebooks, laptops, desktops, tablets and iPads.

Why does it matter: Things that many take for granted — web browsing, sending emails and attachments, videoconferencing, data entry — are foundational digital skills that schools and employers require, and that are necessary for participation in connected daily life, yet without them, many cannot access telehealth appointments, avoid scams, pay bills, or improve their job skills.

Jeovany Fuentes, a college student from Gonzales, attended a workshop in May, where he learned valuable computer skills that helped him develop a resume for his future job search. Upon learning about the opportunity to receive a Chromebook upon completion, he was thrilled at the prospect of having a dedicated device, freeing him from the challenges of relying solely on his phone or borrowed school devices.

“I liked everything about the workshop and its topics,” said Fuentes. “The way the instructors of LFC taught was in such an interesting and dynamic manner. The class topics helped me even more to use and explore my new computer and the online world.”

“Digital access and digital literacy are key components to closing the digital divide in the Monterey Bay region, particularly in its more rural communities,” said MBEP President & CEO Tahra Goraya. “We’re thrilled at the success of this collaboration and underscore the powerful impact tools such as digital access and digital skills have in uplifting our regional economy.”

“Loaves, Fishes & Computers (LFC) is a dynamic nonprofit organization dedicated to bridging the digital divide,” said LFC Marketing and Programs Manager Jacqueline Leon. “As we continue to grow, we are proud to receive grants that enable us to expand our services across the tri-county area.”

In the works for Loaves, Fishes & Computers is a project to train and deploy Digital Navigators throughout the region to provide vital tech support, lead workshops, and connect individuals with valuable resources to enhance digital literacy and access in Pajaro.

About Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP): Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP) is a regional member-supported nonprofit organization consisting of public, private, and civic entities located throughout the counties of Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz. Founded in 2015, our mission is to improve the economic health and quality of life in the region.

About Loaves, Fishes, and Computers: The mission of Loaves, Fishes, and Computers is to help individuals and families overcome the digital and economic divide within the community by providing low-cost and no-cost computer systems and technology assistance/computer repair to low-income individuals, families, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities.

Marie Vasari Hislop
Monterey Bay Economic Partnership
+1 831-224-2132

media@mbep.biz

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/771652694>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.