

Laptops for Students of Migrant Farmworkers During a Pandemic

Roger Russell, MLS
Associate Director

Mary Roby, MLS
Assistant Director for User Service

Jamie Bloss, MLIS
Librarian Liaison to Allied Health Sciences & School of Dental Medicine

Beth Ketterman, MLS
Director

Laupus Library, East Carolina University
Greenville, NC



We got funded!

- State Library of North Carolina (SNLC)
- CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security)
- Partnership Grant
- \$74,996.00



A Three-part Project



- Technology
 - laptops,
 - backpacks,
 - mic/earphone headsets,
 - 2 flash drives
- Instruction
 - health information literacy class, strong focus on COVID19 – CE bearing
 - MEP, ESL, public school teachers – 34 attendees
- Offline “Pocket Library”, and other materials
 - library focus on COVID19 information – 80 GB
 - handouts, video tutorial – Laupus created

Flashdrives distributed with laptops

- 1 flashdrive contained an offline library from WiderNet@UNC – contained NC COVID-19 info, videos, information tutorial, Legal Aid of NC, Student Action with Farmworkers site, and more
- 1 flashdrive contained handouts on educational resources and health resources on COVID-19 in English and Spanish; 1 introduction video file which were created by graduate students in Health and Human Performance program at ECU; 8 video files on finding health information online and evaluating it (4 in English and 4 in Spanish)
- Professional translation services were used

Feedback on laptops & flashdrives



- The students were very grateful for the laptop and the information provided via the thumb drive: “Oh, they love it. They love it. They couldn’t believe it that it was free, and they actually say that they were like inspired by it.” One participant mentioned that “every family that was afforded a computer from this program, they were extremely excited and very grateful to be able to have their own device.”
- *I think a lot of the students do not have Internet at home. They do their homework at school, and for them to be able to use those [laptops] at home without Internet is really good, so I asked them, I said, “Have you researched stuff like that, like sicknesses on the computer when you’re at home and you don’t have Internet?” They said, “Yeah, definitely, we explain to my mom and my dad about different things that they would ask.” so I think that was a great tool... -- I think that was wonderful. (MEP staff 1, Female 46 yrs.)*

- We provided a four hour “train the trainer” session for migrant ed and ESL teachers and staff from counties across NC. 34 participants.
- Four hours total – 1 hour of prework before the program, 2 hours synchronous training online, 1 hour exercise on their own after the program – finding websites on either hypertension or diabetes and evaluating those websites using the CRAAP test
- Topics for the training including evaluating information online, locating health information especially on COVID-19, using Google Advanced Search and basic PubMed searching

- *... I really didn't know honestly, I didn't how to look up to the internet. And I'd see something, and I'd just read it. I didn't know how to go exactly to the resources..., and I didn't pay attention when that article was dated... And I didn't know which one [article] to believe... but now I know how to go in and search a specific thing. I didn't know that either. So, I love that. And I'm passing it around. (MEP staff 4, Female, 46 yrs.)*
- One interviewee (MEP staff 3, Female 43) explained: “Well, I loved the way that they -- I got -- you know the four hours training..., how to go and search for sicknesses? I learned a lot about that. I loved that because now I know which one [website] I can rely on (MEP staff 2, Female, 46 yrs.).”

Challenges & Lessons Learned



- Laptop order delayed 2 months
 - clear & frequent communication w/ team & funders
 - stay focused
- Logistics & “last mile” details
 - uploading Pocket Library to flash drives – labor intensive
 - setup or No Setup on laptops
- Having a great team is key
 - ECU Dept. Health Information & Promotion
 - NC Migrant Education Program
 - NC English as a Second Language
 - Student Action with Farmworkers
 - NC Department of Public Instruction – 4 counties
 - Library colleagues – the backbone of the team!

...from the qualitative report

- The implementation of this project served a critical role of easing a dire burden that students and their families faced—i.e., lack of technology and information access. Therefore, enhancing the work of MEP partners staff to support the migrant families was overwhelmingly beneficial.
- Future projects may do well to assess additional resources that could be included in the laptop before distributing them to students. Refresher training for MEP partner staff would ensure that their approach to accessing and evaluating information remains effective.
- There remains a need to identify ways to improve students and their families' access to internet. In addition to ongoing projects – e.g., the NC Farmworker Health Program's hotspot distribution to migrant farmworker housing, after school programs and weekend activities for students may be developed to address in settings where students may have access to internet.

Laptop Recipients

