

Community Access and Computers 4 People Receive \$250,000 Grant New York Digital Inclusion (NYDI) Fund to Address the Digital Divide

—Funds will address inequities in accessing computers, provide digital literacy training, and hotspots for hundreds of New Yorkers—

NEW YORK, April 24, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Community Access, a New York City-based mental health nonprofit, recently received a \$250,000 grant from the New York Digital Inclusion (NYDI) Fund, to support the nonprofit's efforts to increase connectivity for tenants and program participants with laptop computers, WiFi hotspots, and computer literacy trainings. The grant was jointly awarded to the nonprofit Computers 4 People, an organization formed to create a sustainable solution to the mass pollution of e-waste and the ever-growing digital divide.

The NYDI Fund is managed by the National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) and supported by Schmidt Futures, a philanthropic initiative founded by Eric and Wendy Schmidt.

Most of Community Access' program participants are Black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) with low incomes and histories of homelessness that have impeded their access to the technology that can help them navigate our increasingly digital world. The growing digital divide presents significant roadblocks in people's lives, and this work is a part of Community Access' strategic priority to build resources that can break down these barriers.

Research shows that the digital divide is pervasive in BIPOC communities. Even when studies control for income, education, employment and other demographic factors, a racial digital divide exists in internet, computer and technology access. And, Black and Latinx seniors are more than 2.5 and 3.3 times more likely, respectively, than white seniors to experience negative effects of the digital divide.

"Digital equity is a deep-rooted divide affecting New York City with severe implications for people's economic mobility and overall well-being," said Cal Hedigan, CEO of Community Access. "Nearly half of the people who are digitally disconnected – with no access to broadband, computers, or smartphone technology – are people of color. This puts up roadblocks in people's lives that affect them in many ways: preventing access to telehealth care, barriers in education and job searches, disconnection from family and friends, and much more. In the work we do, it is critical for us to address this disparity, and we are grateful for our partners at Computers 4 People and the New York Digital Inclusion Fund."

"Computers 4 People is thrilled to expand our partnership with Community Access to provide 300 individuals with free refurbished computers, internet, and computer literacy classes," said Dylan Zajac, Founder and Executive Director of Computers 4 People. "These services are necessary to access vital resources such as education, job search, telehealth, and entertainment. Thank you to Schmidt Futures and NDIA for supporting our efforts to close the digital divide."

About Community Access

Founded in 1974, Community Access is a provider of supportive housing and support services in New York City for people living with mental health concerns. Rooted in the simple truth that people are experts in their own lives, Community Access expands opportunities for people living with mental health concerns to recover from trauma and discrimination through