



# News Release

## **AT&T Contributes \$6 Million for Digital Literacy Initiatives Nationwide to Help Narrow Digital Divide**

*More than 400 libraries and community organizations will host in-person digital literacy workshops using online courses developed in collaboration with Public Library Association (PLA)*

DALLAS, August 16, 2022

### **What's the news?**

As part of **\$6 million in contributions**, \*AT&T is bringing bilingual, in-person digital literacy workshops to more than **400 libraries and community centers** across the country. These contributions are part of our [\\$2 billion commitment](#) from 2021 to 2023 to help bridge the digital divide.

AT&T's digital literacy initiatives aim to help more than **65,000 people** learn to use computers and mobile devices, navigate the internet and commonly used apps, and participate safely and responsibly in today's increasingly connected world. These are crucial skills for people who are new to using the internet and computers.

The workshops will utilize online digital literacy courses available through [AT&T ScreenReady®](#) and [PLA Digital Learn](#). Created in collaboration with the [Public Library Association \(PLA\)](#), the courses teach skills ranging from technology basics to avoiding scams.

The Public Library Association selected [160 libraries](#) that will receive contributions to host digital literacy workshops. Two national digital equity nonprofit organizations, [Digitunity](#) and [Connected Nation](#), will work with their network members to host workshops at community centers across the country.

### **Why is this important?**

[According to the FCC](#), more than 30% of the U.S. population does not have fixed broadband service even though it's available in their area. Even with access to affordable service, some are still not taking advantage of connectivity because they lack the tools and resources to navigate the web safely and responsibly.



Strong digital literacy skills are crucial for overcoming the barriers millions of individuals and families face when first participating in our digital-first world, including factors like privacy and online safety.

Digital literacy workshops can help people learn how to use computers, mobile devices, and internet resources, along with commonly used apps essential to managing personal finances, applying for jobs, obtaining an education, accessing telehealth services, and other everyday activities.

### **What else should I know?**

Public libraries play a vital role in providing access to the internet, devices, and digital content, and knowledgeable staff to all — particularly to people of color and youth in low-income households. In 2019, [nearly 54 million Americans](#) accessed the internet in public places, and public libraries alone hosted nearly 224 million public internet use sessions. During the pandemic, libraries expanded this reach with extended Wi-Fi access and hotspot and device lending.

With support from AT&T, members of Digitunity's Digital Opportunity Network will receive funding to conduct digital literacy workshops at their respective locations over a six-month period. Other nonprofit organizations interested in offering these courses can apply to join the Network on Digitunity's [website](#).

Connected Nation will support virtual and in-person workshops for military families at its [Fort Campbell Training Facility](#) and in partnership with local community organizations in counties and regions across the U.S. Connected Nation has provided these areas – also known as Connected Communities – with technology planning services through its Connected Program, which recognized digital literacy training as a need.

### **What are they saying?**

“It will take a collective response to narrow the digital divide,” said **Charlene Lake, chief sustainability officer, senior vice president, AT&T corporate responsibility, ESG**. “That’s why AT&T is collaborating with libraries and community centers to bring digital literacy tools and resources to people who are unconnected or newly connected and unable to carry out many of the essential tasks our increasingly digital world requires.”



"A [2020 PLA survey](#) found that about 88% of public libraries provide some form of digital literacy support, but only 42% offer formal classes. Staffing and funding were the top barriers to providing technology training," said **PLA President Maria McCauley**. "AT&T's contribution to PLA will boost access to digital literacy skills for the most vulnerable in our communities."

**\*About Philanthropy & Social Innovation at AT&T**

We're committed to advancing education, creating opportunities, strengthening communities and improving lives. As part of our companywide \$2 billion commitment from 2021 to 2023 to address the digital divide, we launched AT&T Connected Learning to invest in connectivity and technology, digital literacy and education solutions to help today's learners succeed inside and outside of the classroom. Since 2008, we've committed more than \$600 million to programs that help millions of students across all 50 states and around the world, particularly those in underserved communities.

**\*About AT&T**

We help more than 100 million U.S. families, friends and neighbors connect in meaningful ways every day. From the first phone call 140+ years ago to our 5G wireless and multi-gig internet offerings today, we @ATT innovate to improve lives. For more information about AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T), please visit us at [about.att.com](https://about.att.com). Investors can learn more at [investors.att.com](https://investors.att.com).

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