

# Marylanders Online: Bridging the Digital Divide in Rural Communities

March 20, 2025

**Teri Mumm, Digital Navigation Program Manager**

**Julie Slivka, Communications Manager**

University of Maryland Extension (UME)

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**United States Department of Agriculture**

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online, at <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

mail:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or  
fax:  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442;  
email:  
[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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Para presentar una queja por discriminación en el programa, el reclamante debe completar un formulario AD-3027, Formulario de queja por discriminación del programa del USDA, que se puede obtener en línea, en <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf> en cualquier oficina del USDA, llamando al (866) 632-9992, o escribiendo una carta dirigida al USDA. La carta debe contener el nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del reclamante, y una descripción escrita de la supuesta acción discriminatoria en suficiente detalle para informar al Subsecretario de Derechos Civiles (ASCR, por sus siglas en inglés) sobre la naturaleza y la fecha de la presunta violación de los derechos civiles. La carta o el formulario AD-3027 completado debe enviarse al USDA por medio de:

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# About Us

Marylanders Online is a free, statewide program of the University of Maryland Extension (UME) in partnership with the College of Information (INFO) working to promote digital literacy, equity, and inclusion throughout the state of Maryland.

The Marylanders Online program serves as an accessible digital literacy resource that works to close the digital divide experienced by the thousands of Maryland residents who lack access to the internet, a digital device, or the skills to utilize either. Through the provision of quality resources, tools, education, and support, Marylanders Online's goal is to advance digital literacy throughout the state of Maryland.

Visit <https://marylandersonline.umd.edu>.

2024

Marylanders Online  
Year in Review

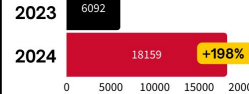
## DIGITAL NAVIGATION

**33** Train-the-Trainer Classes  
**211** Navigators Trained  
**1,113** Training Hours Completed



## TECH SUPPORT HELPLINE

**18,159** Calls Handled



Tech Support Helpline  
Monday to Friday  
10 AM to 8 PM  
Saturday  
10 AM to 5 PM  
Call 301-405-9810  
Toll-Free 1-866-206-8467  
[MarylandersOnline@umd.edu](mailto:MarylandersOnline@umd.edu)

## PARTNERS

**181** Partnerships  
**30** Government Agencies  
**20** Library Agencies  
**18** Educational Institutions

## TECH EXTENSION

**177** Community Events  
**224** Classes & Trainings  
**14,134** People Served



## RESOURCES

**314** Digital Assets Mapped  
**636** Resources Curated  
**10,403** eGov Resource Users



## REACH

Website  
**96K** Pageviews  
**31K** Users  
**33K** Newsletter Opens



**539K** Social Reach



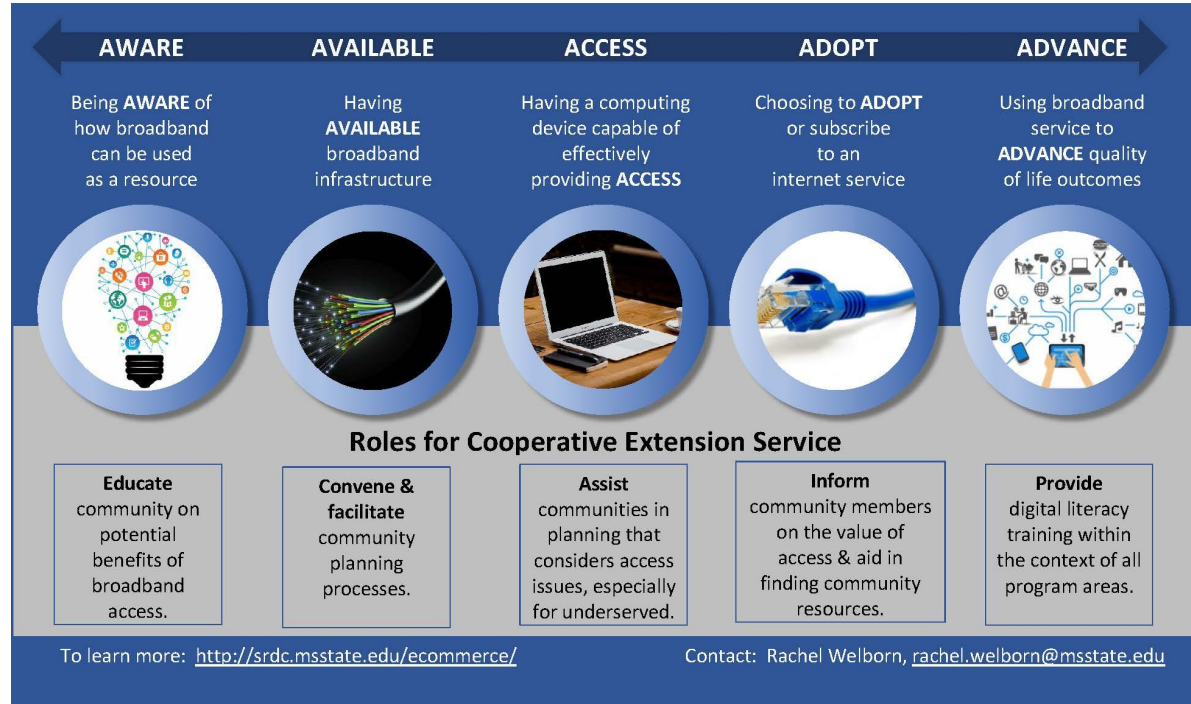
# Agenda & Learning Objectives

- Understand the Intersection of Digital Equity and Social Determinants of Health
- Identify Digital Inclusion Challenges in Rural Communities
- Learn how Marylanders Online was Developed
- Explore Strategic Partnerships for Digital Inclusion
- Develop Strategies for Enhancing Digital Skills in Rural Areas
- Get Connected with UME Marylanders Online!



# DIGITAL ACCESS CONTINUUM

# What is Digital Equity?



# Why Does Digital Inclusion Matter?

**Digital inclusion is considered a Social Determinant of Health.**

The ability to access reliable, affordable internet, appropriate digital devices, and the necessary skills to use both can improve:

- **Healthcare**
- **Education**
- **Workforce Development**
- **Economic Opportunities**
- **Civic Engagement**
- **Social Connections**
- **What else?**



Source: [National Skills Coalition](#), [Abell Foundation](#)




# **Digital Inclusion Challenges in Rural Communities**

# Challenges in Rural Communities

- Infrastructure gaps
- Device access
- Geographic barriers
- Economic feasibility
- Speed disparities
- Affordability
- Digital literacy
- Data inaccuracy
- Inequitable program & funding distribution
- Racial and economic disparities







# **Programs & Resources for Digital Literacy & Inclusion**

# Project Team

- **Program Lead:** Dr. Jinhee Kim, UME Associate Dean/Director
- **Project Director:** Isaias Tesfalidet
- **Tech Extension Educators** across the state of Maryland
- **INFO Curriculum Team:** Dr. Mega Subramaniam and graduate students
- **Digital Navigation Team:** Managed by Teri Mumm
- **Web Team:** Managed by Julie Slivka

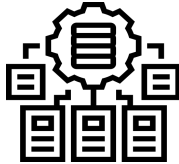
Learn more about our team: <https://go.umd.edu/OurTeam>

# Research-Informed Approach to Addressing Digital Challenges

## INFO Research & Program Development



Stakeholder  
Needs  
Assessment



Resource  
Compilation



Tech  
Helpline



Resources  
Gap Analysis



Website  
Content



Surveys &  
Evaluations

[Learn more about the Needs Assessment Survey](#)

# The Helpline

- Computers, tablets, and cell phones
- Getting on the Internet or Wi-Fi
- Finding digital skills classes and training
- Self-guided digital skills learning
- Applying for government services
- Digital navigator resources
- Advancing digital inclusion in your community

**Call toll-free 1-866-206-8467**

**Email [MarylandersOnline@umd.edu](mailto:MarylandersOnline@umd.edu)**

**Monday-Friday 10 AM - 8 PM, Saturday 10 AM - 5PM**

Grow your digital skills and get connected!  
**[MarylandersOnline.umd.edu](http://MarylandersOnline.umd.edu)**



## Tech Support Helpline

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# Marylanders Online Website

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION | Marylanders Online

FOR NAVIGATORS HELP HOTLINE 1-866-206-8467 EMAIL US EN ESPAÑOL English

Get Help Give Help Get Connected Events About Us

**Empowering Marylanders Through Digital Equity & Accessibility**

Find an answer... Search

Get Help Give Help

- Computer Basics
- Phones and Tablets
- Communicating Online
- Jobs and Education
- Connecting to the internet
- Using Government Services

- **Free** and **accessible** repository of digital literacy resources for users and educators
- **Easy to navigate** on smartphones & laptops, now featuring a search bar
- Resources in both **English & Spanish** with additional languages available via Google Translate



# Resource Curation

## Digital Literacy Tip



**Get Help:  
Guided Learning**

<https://go.umd.edu/GetHelp>



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# Get Help

<https://go.umd.edu/GetHelp>

## Digital Literacy Tip



**Give Help:  
Instructional Resources**

<https://go.umd.edu/GiveHelp>



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# Give Help

<https://go.umd.edu/GiveHelp>



# eGovernment Resources

Scheduling an Appointment  
at the Maryland Motor  
Vehicle Administration (MVA)



<https://go.umd.edu/eGov>

A screenshot of a website interface. At the top left, there is a small Wi-Fi icon and the text "UME - Marylanders Online". The main content area has a red background with white text that reads "[MVA] Schedule an appointment at a local MVA office". Below this text is a white button with the text "START COURSE".



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- <https://go.umd.edu/eGov>
- <https://go.umd.edu/SNAP>
- <https://go.umd.edu/TCA>
- <https://go.umd.edu/MWE>
- <https://go.umd.edu/CDL>
- <https://go.umd.edu/StateID>
- <https://go.umd.edu/MWE>
- <https://go.umd.edu/CDL>
- <https://go.umd.edu/Permit>
- <https://go.umd.edu/License>
- <https://go.umd.edu/Moped>
- <https://go.umd.edu/Title>
- <https://go.umd.edu/MVA>

[Learn about eGov Resources](#)



2024

# Marylanders Online Year in Review

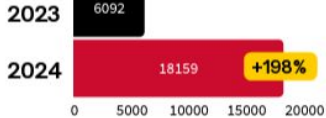
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[Read our 2024 Annual Report](#)





# Asset Mapping

Marylanders Online Assets (Dev)

Zipcode Search

Select a County

Search...

- All
- Allegany County
- Anne Arundel County
- Baltimore city
- Baltimore County
- Calvert County
- Caroline County
- Carroll County

Marylandersonline AssetMap

Submit a Resource

# Add a Resource



Help build a **more connected Maryland** by sharing the digital resources available in your community.



Scan the QR or visit the link below to add details about your organization's digital literacy services, classes, and programs to the Marylanders Online resource map.

<https://go.umd.edu/MD-Resources>

**Together, we can bridge the digital divide in Maryland!**



**Add Your Resources:** <https://go.umd.edu/MD-Resources>

**Add or View Events:** <https://go.umd.edu/EventsCalendar>

# Information Sharing



## ADVANCING DIGITAL OPPORTUNITIES IN MARYLAND

**33%** of Marylanders do not have a computer

**18%** of Marylanders do not use the Internet

**92%** of jobs require digital skills

**1/3** of US workers have limited or no digital skills

On average, a worker will earn more at a job that requires at least one digital skill

**23%** (NATIONAL SKILLS COALITION)

**198,858 MARYLANDERS** Do not have broadband and are not able to fully benefit from the economic, educational, social, health, and civic engagement opportunities that the Internet provides

**THOSE MOST LIKELY TO LACK BROADBAND ACCESS:**

- Veterans
- Rural Residents
- Aging Individuals
- Individuals with Disabilities
- Racial & Ethnic Minorities
- Low-Income Households

**MARYLAND'S AFFORDABILITY GAP**

- In 2023; 133K Chromebooks were distributed.
- 288K Marylanders signed up for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The state's Emergency Broadband Benefit (MEBB) program reaches 33% of eligible households by July 2023.
- 54% of households still lack a digital device.
- In 2024; ACP sunsets & MEBB ends.
- Maryland's Connected Devices Program ends.
- 287,772 Marylanders lose ACP and broadband subsidies.

**PLANNING FOR MARYLAND'S DIGITAL FUTURE**

- Statewide Broadband Infrastructure
- Affordable Statewide Broadband Access
- Community Tech Refurbishment Centers
- Statewide Resource Mapping & Sharing
- Community Capacity Building
- Digital Skill Classes & Workforce Development
- Sustained Funding & Legislative Policies

## HIGHLIGHTING MARYLAND'S DIGITAL INCLUSION EFFORTS



**Garrett County**

- 1,527 Chromebooks distributed
- Grant funding on track to connect 2,500 homes to fiber broadband
- Awarded Connect Humanity grant to develop a Digital Opportunity Plan

**Baltimore County**

- Awarded \$260M+ in grant funding to support broadband
- 13,600 Chromebooks distributed
- Named a 2024 Visionary Trailblazer by NDIA

**Baltimore City**

- 50K devices distributed
- Named a 2024 Visionary Trailblazer by NDIA
- 30 local organizations awarded \$3M in Digital Equity Funds to close the digital divide

**Carroll County**

- 79% of addresses have access to reliable internet
- 4,000 addresses are scheduled or under construction

**Montgomery County**

- Reached nearly 29K residents through Senior Planet programs
- Distributed 117K laptops
- MoCo broadband expanded to 6 affordable housing developments

**Southern Maryland**

- St. Mary's County recognized as the #1 Digital County for its size
- Charles County distributed 8,000 Chromebook devices and has connected 98% of addresses to broadband

**UME Marylanders Online Statewide Tech Support Helpline Calls**

Year	English	Spanish
2023	5,394	708
2024	6,092	18,159

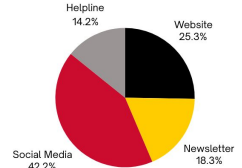
Call Totals

Learn more: <https://go.umd.edu/TechSupport>

## At a Glance

## UME Marylanders Online 2024 Communications Report

### DIGITAL NAVIGATOR HELPLINE



### SOCIAL MEDIA



### WEBSITE & RESOURCES





# **Building Partnerships for Digital Literacy & Inclusion**

# Strategic Partnerships



- **National**
  - National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)
  - Senior Planet AARP
- **Statewide**
  - Office of Statewide Broadband
  - Rural Maryland Council
  - Maryland Accessible Telecommunications
- **County**
  - Social Services, Libraries, Ext. Offices, Depts of Aging
- **Educational**
  - UMD College of Information
  - Penn State Extension
- **Local**
  - Gilchrist Immigrant Resource Center
  - St. Mark's Parish
  - CASA

# Training Partnerships

## Enoch Pratt Library Digital Navigator Train-the-Trainer Program

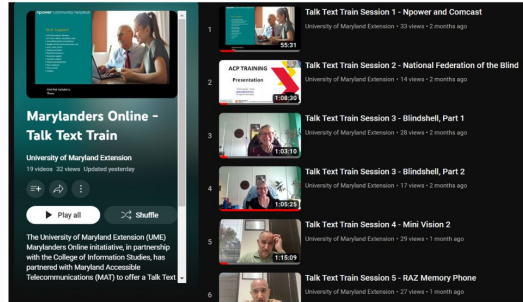


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## Maryland Accessible Telecommunications AT Train-the-Trainer Program

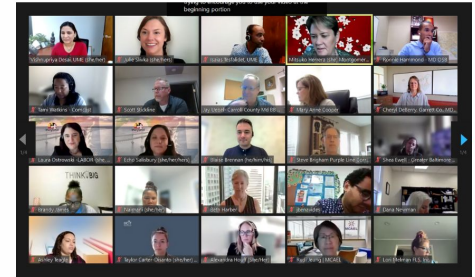


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## National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA) Digital Navigator Training



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18 Digital Navigators graduated from the Enoch Pratt Library digital navigator train-the-trainer program, “Pratt Adventure & Beyond”.

30 low-vision and blind digital navigators graduated from the “Talk, Text, and Train” training program in partnership with MAT.

341 individuals attended the four digital navigator trainings offered in partnership with NDIA in 2024.



# Programs & Pilot Projects

## PILOT PROJECT

Digital Skills, Financial Education, and  
Small Business Ownership for  
Incarcerated Individuals Nearing Release



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# MONET

Marylanders Online Navigator Education Toolkit

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Read More: [Pilot Projects](#) | [MONET](#)



# **Strategies for Enhancing Digital Skills and Adoption in Rural Communities**



# A Diverse Team

## Representative of the Community





# Coalitions & Committees

## To Support Capacity Building



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### Join the Maryland Digital Equity Coalition (MDEC)



#### MISSION

Connect organizations and local governments to anchor and amplify digital inclusion work in Maryland, empowering communities towards digital equity.

#### VISION

Foster a strong network of individuals and organizations engaged in digital inclusion. Share resources and best practices to enhance community support. Increase awareness of digital equity programs across the state. Develop resources tailored to the needs of MDEC communities, including training for digital navigators and rural county staff.

#### Get Involved!

Join MDEC to participate in initiatives that bridge the digital divide in Maryland. Your engagement is crucial for fostering collaboration and driving meaningful change in our communities.



#### CONTACT US

Phone: 301-226-3429

Email: [tmumm@umd.edu](mailto:tmumm@umd.edu)



# Community Input Evaluation & Feedback



**“ I will finally be able to video chat with my son who is overseas in the military. ”**

WASHINGTON COUNTY  
CHROMEBOOK RECIPIENT

**#DigitalInclusion Means Connection**

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## Talk Text Train Series Survey Results

2023 REPORT

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION



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# Internet & Wi-Fi Resources

## RESOURCE TIP

### Find Wi-Fi Near You

[marylandersonline.umd.edu/get-connected/wifi-locations](https://marylandersonline.umd.edu/get-connected/wifi-locations)



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- Find Free Wi-Fi: <https://go.umd.edu/FindWiFi>
- Post ACP FAQs: <https://go.umd.edu/acp>
  - [Maryland Broadband Navigator Map](#)
  - [Free and Low-Cost Internet Plans](#)
  - [National Broadband Map](#)
- [Connect with a Digital Navigator](#)

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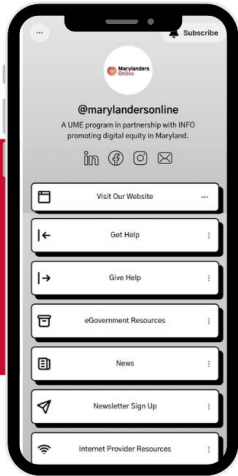
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# Quick Links

## FIND US ON LINKTREE



Quick Links to Resources & More  
[linktr.ee/marylandersonline](https://linktr.ee/marylandersonline)

Linktree:

<https://linktr.ee/marylandersonline>

Marketing Materials:

<https://go.umd.edu/Flyers>

Newsletters:

<https://go.umd.edu/NewsletterMO>

Get Help Resources:

<https://go.umd.edu/GetHelp>

Give Help Resources:

<https://go.umd.edu/GiveHelp>

# Upcoming Events

## DIGITAL EQUITY GRANT PLANNING WEBINAR SERIES

Empower Your Digital Literacy Initiatives! Join the Maryland Digital Equity Coalition (MDEC) for a free webinar series designed to equip digital literacy practitioners with the knowledge and skills needed to build programs, partnerships, and successful digital equity grant applications. Learn about applying, planning, and evaluating your initiatives. All webinars will be recorded and posted on the Marylanders Online [YouTube channel](#).

### WEBINAR 1

#### Digital Opportunity Grant Basics

Wednesday, March 12th  
1 PM - 2 PM  
[REGISTER HERE](#)

### WEBINAR 2

#### Rural Maryland & Digital Skills Training

Wednesday, March 26th  
1 PM - 2 PM  
[REGISTER HERE](#)

### WEBINAR 3

#### Workforce Development & Digital Skills (Part 1)

Wednesday, April 9th  
1 PM - 2 PM  
[REGISTER HERE](#)

### WEBINAR 4

#### Workforce Development & Digital Skills (Part 2)

Wednesday, April 23rd  
1 PM - 2 PM  
[REGISTER HERE](#)

### WEBINAR 5

#### Older Adults & Digital Skills & Technology

Wednesday, May 7th  
1 PM - 2 PM  
[REGISTER HERE](#)

### WEBINAR 6

#### People with Disabilities & Digital Inclusion

Wednesday, May 21st  
1 PM - 2 PM  
[REGISTER HERE](#)

### WEBINAR 7

#### Artificial Intelligence (AI) & Digital Skill Building

Wednesday, May 28th  
1 PM - 2 PM  
[REGISTER HERE](#)

LEARN MORE

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Addressing Disability Disparities Through Health Equity

May 30

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Tech Literacy in the Digital Health Era

June 6

11 AM - 12 PM

Tackling Social Disparities in Access & Technology

June 13

11 AM - 12 PM

Geographical Disparities in Health Equity & Access

June 20

11 AM - 12 PM

Policy, Health Misinformation, & Public Trust

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Social Media's Impact on Public Health & Spread of Health Misinformation

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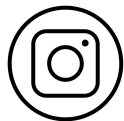
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