



San Francisco bridges the Digital Divide with Free Wifi for Low-Income Housing

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Published on March 5th, 2009

Posted in [Social Entrepreneurship](#), [Technology](#)

AT & T has partnered with One Economy and Meraki to bring free WI-FI internet to low income communities Sunnydale Housing Authority, San Francisco's largest low income housing project.

[San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom](#) gathered with the leaders of the three partnership companies who have successfully helped better San Francisco's low income communities by providing free broadband access to [Sunnydale](#) also which the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) calls one of the most depressed, dangerous and decrepit areas of the city.

The Housing Authority was created in 1938 to help poor families build better lives by creating temporary subsidized housing. Over the years, the once well-kept projects turned into havens for crime, and the services that families need to get out and move on (child care, job training, legal help and counseling) have disappeared thanks to cutbacks. The authority is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and overseen by a seven-member Housing Authority Commission appointed by the mayor.

In January 2009, Mayor Gavin Newsom announced [free Wi-Fi to all the residents of a Sunnydale housing development](#) as part of the city's "Network of Community Networks" plan that makes free wireless networks available to over 2,000 units at San Francisco Housing Authority developments.

Home to a downtrodden community, Sunnydale is littered with with bottles, trash dirty diapers in the trees and is a mecca for mice and cockroaches. Geographically, it is distinctly 'separate' from the rest of San Francisco which is one reason why its "temporary residents" invariably stay long term. However they hope that bridging the technological divide here will enable Sunnydale youth to achieve their true potential by crossing historical class and geographic barriers.