**New Beginning Coalition (NBC) meeting (notes by Florence Wong)**

**Date: 05/16/23**

**Topic: Isolation and Loneliness**

Presenter #1: Dima Khoury, Senior Program Manager, Community Tech Network (CTN)

* “Access to Technology” program run in collaboration with San Mateo Co. AAS
* CTN started in 2008
* Goal is to decrease isolation among seniors through digital literacy training
* CTN headquartered in SF but operates throughout the Bay Area
* Offers direct services to seniors as well as “training for trainers” to widen reach
* Training offered in multiple languages
* Mix of staff and volunteers
* CTN wants to give seniors tools that lead to empowerment
* Services historically in-person and are still in-person; added virtual option during pandemic
* Affordable and inclusive access to technology devices and internet service
* Older adults (60+) and adults with disabilities (18+) are eligible
* Eligible clients receive a free tablet device that remains theirs if they live in San Mateo Co.
* 6 months of free internet service and help with finding affordable options, such as, federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)
* “Home Connect Program” is the fully virtual option that is reserved for the most vulnerable clients: Free tablet, 6 months of free internet service, 5 1-hour long 1:1 lessons
* Testimonials from clients describe increased socializing, decreased isolation, and increased hope for the future
* CTN is looking for referrals, prioritizing people who are the most disadvantaged (e.g., does not own a device and has no/poor internet service
* Technically, there is no income requirement to receive CTN services
* Currently not set-up to help people with complete blindness

Presenter #2: Ryan Kawamoto, Older Adults Technology Services (OATS), AARP affiliate

* Established in 2004; [www.oats.org](http://www.oats.org); rkawamoto@oats.org
* “Resources to Socially Engage: Senior Planet from AARP”
* Goal is to reduce isolation among older adults with health outcomes in mind
* Goal is to close the digital divide (42% of US seniors lack internet access)
* 3 methods of reaching seniors: Centers, partner sites, and online
* SeniorPlanet.org hosts free teaching sessions, usually need to pre-register
* Impact Areas: health, social, creative, financial, advocacy
* Toll-free National Hotline (888) 713-3495, M-F 6am-5pm, multilingual
* Discussion groups have been found to decrease social isolation
* Social media platform: community.seniorplanet.org
* SeniorPlanet.org has accommodations for visually-impaired seniors
* Avenidas in Palo Alto recently trained and licensed by OATS to provide services

**Next NBC meeting will be 7/18/23 and the topic will be Older Adults and the Environment**