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Mi Casa Celebrates Youth Efforts to Bridge the Digital Divide

June 4, 2011 (DENVER): Mi Casa is proud to announce the graduation of the second class of Digital Connectors! These 17 youth ages 14 to 21 successfully completed this rigorous nine-month digital technology training program, and their achievement was marked by a celebration on June 4.

The Digital Connectors program engages youth to bridge the digital divide – the gap between those with access to digital technology and those without – by educating youth about digital technology, financial literacy, and leadership and encouraging them to share their knowledge with the community. During the 2010-11 school year, Mi Casa’s Digital Connectors performed nearly 300 hours of community service, which benefitted nearly 400 community members.

The graduation ceremony was another opportunity for the Digital Connectors to share the skills learned in the classroom with members of their own diverse communities. Over 60 people attended the event, which included a screening of the students’ final video projects. These videos showcase unsung heroes and leaders in the Connectors’ lives who were identified and interviewed to produce a final video testimonial project. Though the videos are as unique as each Connector, common themes include encouraging people to recognize their own inner hero and the joy of paying it forward.

The 17 students who graduated from the Digital Connectors program this month all earned a financial literacy certification from EverFi, as well as a Cisco Authorization diploma. Armed with these valuable certifications, Digital Connectors graduates are poised to capitalize on the leadership and career-readiness skills they gained in the program to excel in school or in employment.

In recognition of their hard work, all Digital Connectors graduates receive a new netbook computer, a flip camera, a USB drive, and a \$250 stipend. The Digital Connectors program is made possible by a collaboration between Comcast Foundation, One Economy Corporation and Mi Casa Resource Center.

Congratulations to the Digital Connectors Class of 2011!

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About Mi Casa Resource Center: Mi Casa is among the oldest and largest Latino-serving organizations in Colorado, founded in 1976 by eight Head Start mothers in west Denver. Mi Casa creates new opportunities through career education to help workers with limited skills and education get a job launch promising careers; business education to help underserved entrepreneurs forge a path to prosperity through self-employment; and out-of-school enrichment programs for youth focused on academic success. 35 years, Mi Casa has been committed to advancing the economic success of Latino and low-income families.

About the Digital Connectors program: Digital Connectors is a youth development initiative focused on digital literacy, leadership skills, life skills, and community service. Youth participating in Mi Casa's Digital Connectors are 14 to 21 in age and represent diverse backgrounds and various high schools in Denver. In order to graduate from the program, each Connector must complete a minimum of 150 hours of instruction and 50 hours of community service. The year-long curriculum is divided into six modules that deliver the 12 core competencies of the program. (Leadership Diversity, Personal Development, Workforce Development, Financial Literacy, Community Mapping, Digital Literacy, Hardware & Networks, Software & Programming, Media Production and Civic Journalism, Environment & Sustainability, Service & Global Engagement, and Teaching & Facilitation.). In an effort to decrease the digital divide that exists in our society, the Digital Connectors learn to use technology to fuel their own success and reach out to give back to their community.



The 2011 Class of Mi Casa Digital Connectors