



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

At its meeting held February 10, 2004, the Board took the following action:

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Supervisor Burke made the following statement:

“The number of Black families who own computers is rapidly increasing. So is the percentage of Black households with an Internet connection. But while the number looks optimistic--and they are--the issue of the Digital Divide remains a critical challenge for minorities when it comes to using technology in ways that truly matter.

“As a nation, we must continue to narrow the gap in the level of computer skills, in the relevance of Web content, in the quality of Internet connections in poor communities, as well as the quality of technology-based education in disadvantaged schools. Most importantly, we need to make sure that technology, as well as every other tool at our disposal, is used to improve the quality of education in disadvantaged schools so that young people have the necessary academic skills to succeed.

“When it comes to computers and the Internet, the real issue for the Black community is how to use it to become innovators and producers--to not only join the technology revolution but to figure prominently among its leaders and become role models for future generations. Measuring the Digital Divide is vital to a clear understanding of progress. By 2000 (the latest year with statistics provided by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration) 55% of White families owned a home computer and 50% used the Internet. By comparison, 32.6% of Black households owned a home computer, with only 29% using the Internet. The gap in both continues to increase.”

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Merritt Holloway and Warren Williams addressed the Board.

After discussion, on motion of Supervisor Burke, seconded by Supervisor Antonovich, unanimously carried, the Board took the following actions:

1. Proclaimed the week of February 15 through 21, 2004 as "Black Family Technology Awareness Week" throughout Los Angeles County; and
2. Joined with IBM, the lead corporate sponsor, in its plan to partner with schools, churches and community organizations nationwide to sponsor forums that demonstrate how technology is best used to improve the quality of life.

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