

## **The Enrichment Channel Executive Summary**

The primary goal of The Enrichment Channel was the creation of an educational resource for students, teachers, and families in Southeast Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. By leveraging multiple forms of media, DPTV created resources that are being used in the classroom and beyond. The project was designed to integrate student learning with professional development for teachers. Importantly, the project also aimed to involve parents to foster learning beyond the classroom. The chosen method of delivery was early literacy thematic learning experiences, rooted in community-based arts and cultural institutions, which were aligned to the Michigan Curriculum Framework (MCF) and consistent with Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP). The second goal of TEC project was the development of a comprehensive educational content production and delivery model that could be replicated in other public television markets. For the purposes of the project, this goal was tied to replication activities in Marquette located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (UP)

The project produced three literacy content units (LCUs) via CD-ROM, video broadcast and the Internet. Each LCU was produced in collaboration with five Michigan local educational agencies (LEAs) and WNMU-Channel 13, the public TV station of the UP. DPTV staff and partners developed the content, filmed local cultural institutions, and pilot tested and disseminated the final products. Overall, nearly 200,000 students and 24,000 teachers were served.

### *Target Population*

The early literacy series developed and provided through TEC targeted second, third and fourth grade students. This population was chosen to align with the state and federal goal that all students will be able to read by the fourth grade.

Michigan has increasingly focused policy initiatives on early elementary students. Recent initiatives include the Reading Plan for Michigan and the Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP). Educational content specialists from the five regional LEAs providing service in Southeast and the UP (Detroit, Macomb, Marquette-Alger, Oakland, and Wayne Counties) Michigan were integrally involved in the development of the early literacy programs for TEC.

Utilizing the resources of DPTV, the project reached more than 56 percent of Michigan's total student population. The Enrichment Channel project served millions of consumers in Southeastern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. Project products were disseminated through both public and private schools, and DPTV's weekly broadcast reaches 1.1 million households per week. To support and amplify the early literacy learning processes for disadvantaged children living below the poverty line, The Enrichment Channel initiative is working closely with community organizations to provide additional computer use opportunities. By using community resources in the project products, The Enrichment Channel linked individuals—first in Southeast Michigan and second in Marquette—to the arts and cultural institutions in their area.

### *Achievement of Project Goals*

“The Enrichment Channel, because of the many options for sharing that information technology affords, can enrich the learning experiences of all learners by providing equitable access not only to the resources of local and state cultural institutions, but eventually national resources as well. This educational utility has the capability of transforming previously isolated groups of people into inter-generation and inter-connected communities of learners.”

*Goals 1 & 2: Create an arts and culture educational resource – Students, teachers, and families in Southeast Michigan will have a unique educational resource available to them, The Enrichment Channel, which can create and deliver multimedia instructional programs, community-based resource materials, and professional development experiences directly into classrooms and homes.*

Detroit Public Television (DPTV) created a valuable educational resource through The Enrichment Channel project. The three learning content units—*Welcome to Youville*, *Our Great Region*, and *Technology Rocks!*—presented their concepts in a multifaceted manner. Each unit proved that learning is not limited to the classroom, as the cameras followed the student stars through a variety of community and cultural resources to present the educational concepts.

DPTV used the expertise of all project participants in shaping the development of each learning content unit. For example, following each of the video and CD-ROM production efforts, project evaluators conducted a focus group meeting so that the project management team could solicit feedback and ideas for future development.

Each learning content unit was broadcast multiple times through the DPTV/WNMU-TV partnership so that teachers, parents, and students could observe the program on their own. Because none of the units required additional materials, each broadcast could stand on its own educational merit. For parents, this allowed them to enjoy the program with their children without having to worry about buying additional materials. Teachers were able to adapt the program to serve their needs in the classroom, using it as a professional development opportunity in presenting concepts to their students. While many teachers received their own copies of the video and CD-ROM, the broadcast schedule insured that all teachers and students had access to the materials produced by the project.

By the end of the project, all homes and schools in Southwest Michigan were able to see the broadcast and 15,500 teachers had received the CD-ROM. It is telling that the first two learning content units, produced in the first year of the project, were nominated for six Emmy awards. Most prominently, *Welcome to Youville* won three Emmys for Outstanding Children’s Program, Best Program Videography and Best Program Graphics. The program’s corresponding CD-ROM, *Youville. It’s Where You Live!*, received one of only seven Silver Hugo’s awarded in the 51 category Chicago International Communications Film & Video Competition.

When asked, teachers said they would recommend the corresponding CD-ROMs to their colleagues, most indicated (64.5% for *Welcome to Youville*, 72.3% for *Our Great Region* and 75% for *Technology Rocks!*) that they would definitely encourage others to use the project's products, thereby insuring that the project's effects will last longer than just the funding period.

Through the creation of three multimedia learning content units, Detroit Public Television exceeded its goal of creating an educational resource. The Enrichment Channel has, for two years, served as an outlet linking learning from the classroom to the community and culture in which the students live.

*Goal 3: Michigan will have a model comprehensive educational broadcast resource that can be replicated in public television markets of all sizes and configurations that because of its integrated use of a wide range of technologies can bring schools, communities, and homes together in a unique fashion to support learning for all.*

In year two of The Enrichment Channel project, DPTV replicated its efforts in the Marquette region of the Upper Peninsula. In doing so, the project team took the production model from Southeastern Michigan and applied it to an entirely different population of people. Despite differences in market size, the education community, and the environment in which students learn, LCU3 was a decided success.

By the end of the project, all UP viewers had the opportunity to see a broadcast and more than 250 teachers had received the CD-ROM based entirely on local content. Results from teacher surveys of the project's CD-ROM indicated that not only would most (79%) teachers use the material in their classroom, but they would recommend that their colleagues use the materials as well (74.6%).

As discussed above, the educational units linked learning to the various environments of a student's life. Under the second goal of the project, the management team demonstrated that regardless of differences in market size in the particular experiences of students, the production plan developed through Goal 1 could serve as a replicable model for public television markets of all sizes and configurations.

## Conclusions

This project was designed to address two main goals. The first was to create an arts and culture educational resource, The Enrichment Channel, that could develop, produce and deliver multimedia instructional programs, community-based resource materials, and professional development experiences directly into classrooms and homes. The second was that Michigan would have a model comprehensive educational broadcast resource that could be replicated in public television markets of all sizes and configurations that, because of its integrated use of a wide range of technologies, could bring schools, communities, and homes together in a unique fashion to support learning for all.

Three distinct content units were created as part of The Enrichment Channel. Based on comments from reviews of the project products, not only did the project produce content aligned with the benchmarks for early elementary students, but also did so in a developmentally sequenced and effective manner. Nearly all teacher respondents indicated that they would be using the products in their classroom and that they would encourage other teachers to use the products in their classrooms as well. While student achievement has not yet been measured, the simple fact that The Enrichment Channel exists and that the three units have been disseminated to thousands of Michigan educators is a great accomplishment. The growing number of awards the project has received are a strong indicator that these programs will have a lasting impact on learning in Michigan.

TEC accomplished its goals by creating, broadcasting and distributing the three learning content units to teachers, learners, and families in southeastern and northern Michigan. It is becoming a unique arts and culture educational resource. It can and has delivered award-winning multimedia instructional programs, community-based resource materials, and professional development experiences directly to classrooms and homes. TEC has produced a three-part series of Michigan Curriculum Framework-aligned early literacy thematic learning experiences that use the resources of community-based arts and cultural institutions to promote real-world literacy.