Mobile Point-in-Time Count Survey Development

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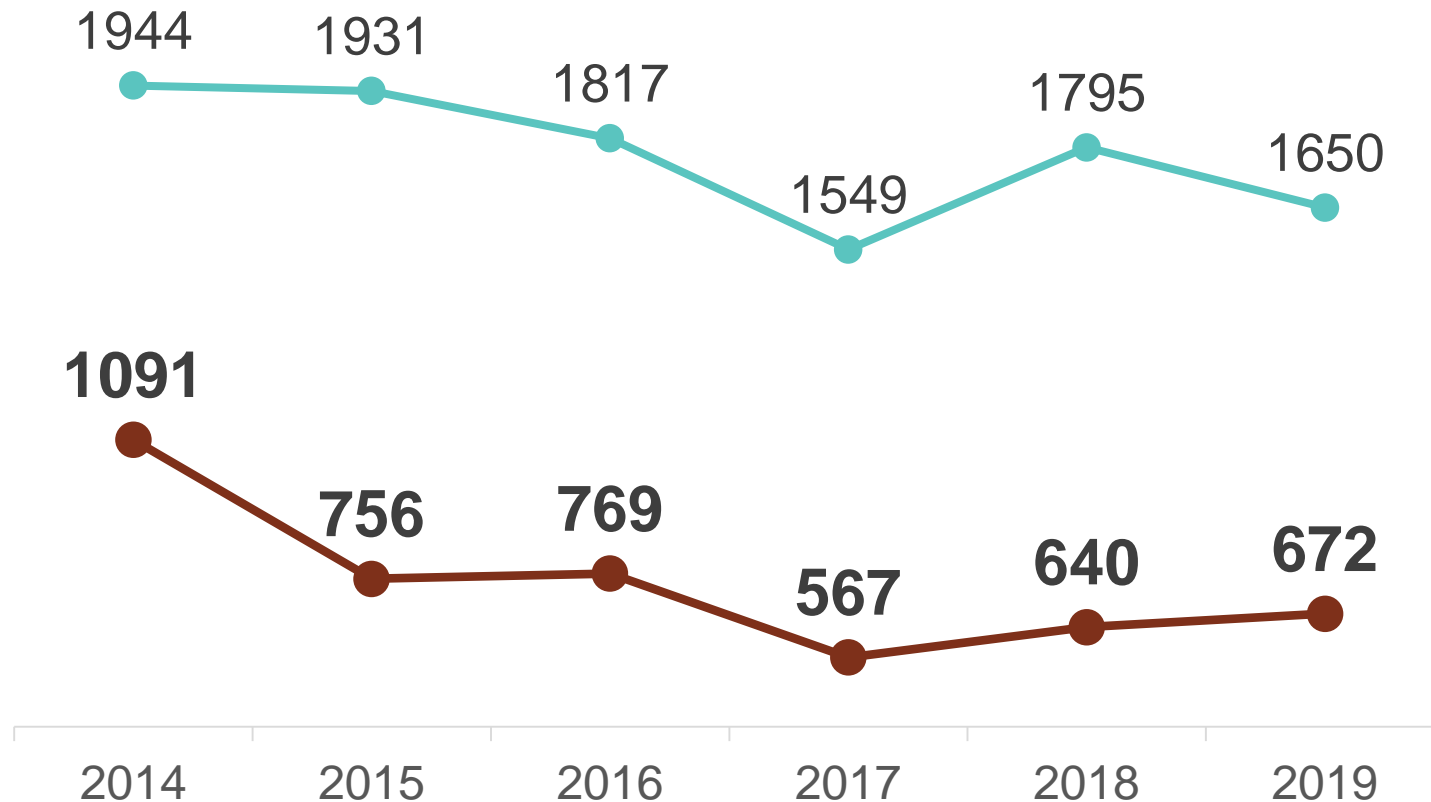October 9-11, 2019 · Rosen Centre Hotel · Orlando, FL

www.fchonline.org

Community Profile: **Tampa/Hillsborough County CoC**

- Geography: **Hillsborough County, Florida**
- Area: **1,266 square miles**
- Population: **1.409 million people**
- Poverty Rate: **15.7%**

- CoC & HMIS Lead and Collaborative Applicant: **Tampa Hillsborough Homeless Initiative**
- 2018 CoC Award Amount: **$6,347,400**
- 2019 PIT Count: **1,650**

This is us

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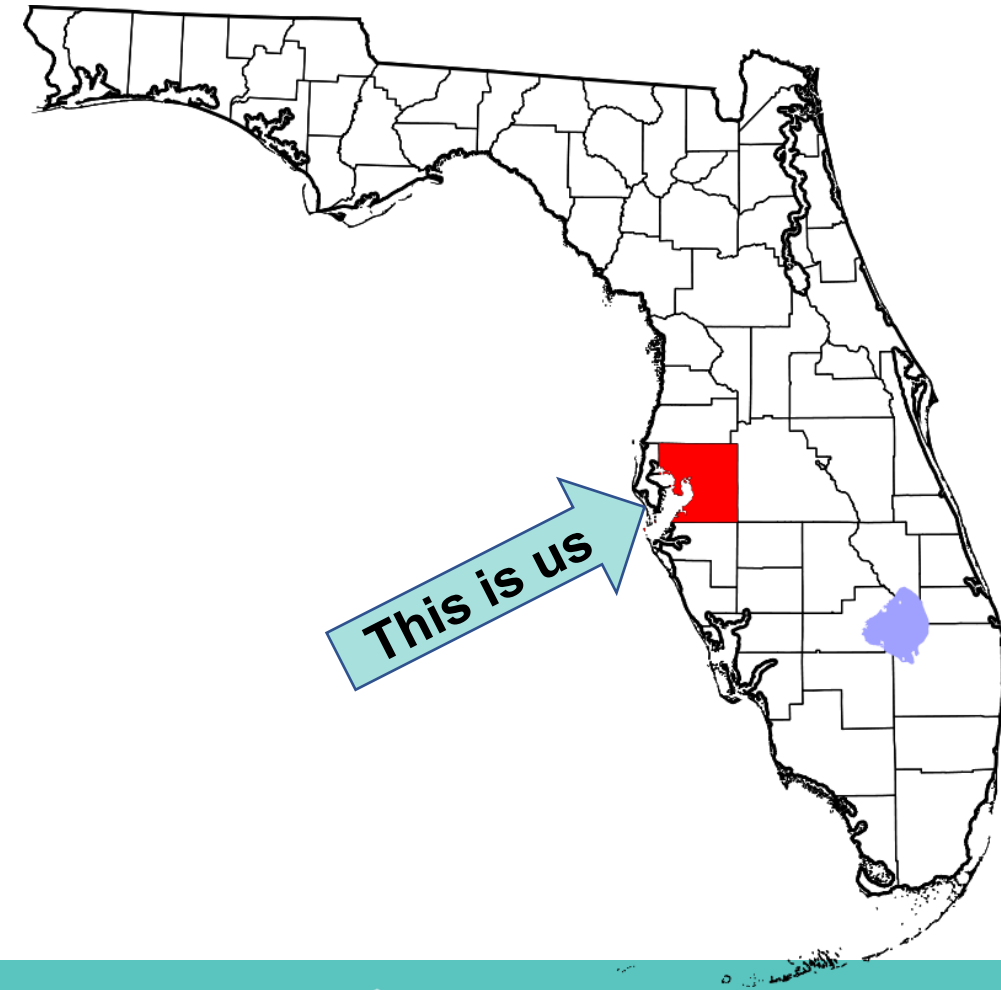
Tampa/Hillsborough County PIT Count

Tampa/Hillsborough County CoC PIT Count Total and Unsheltered Count from 2014 to 2019

1944   1931   1817   1795   1650
                1549

1091
        756   769   567   640   672

2014   2015   2016   2017   2018   2019

Total Count
Unsheltered Count

Point-in-Time Count Methodology

PIT Count Methodology

Sheltered Count:
• HMIS Data • Some Provider Level Surveys

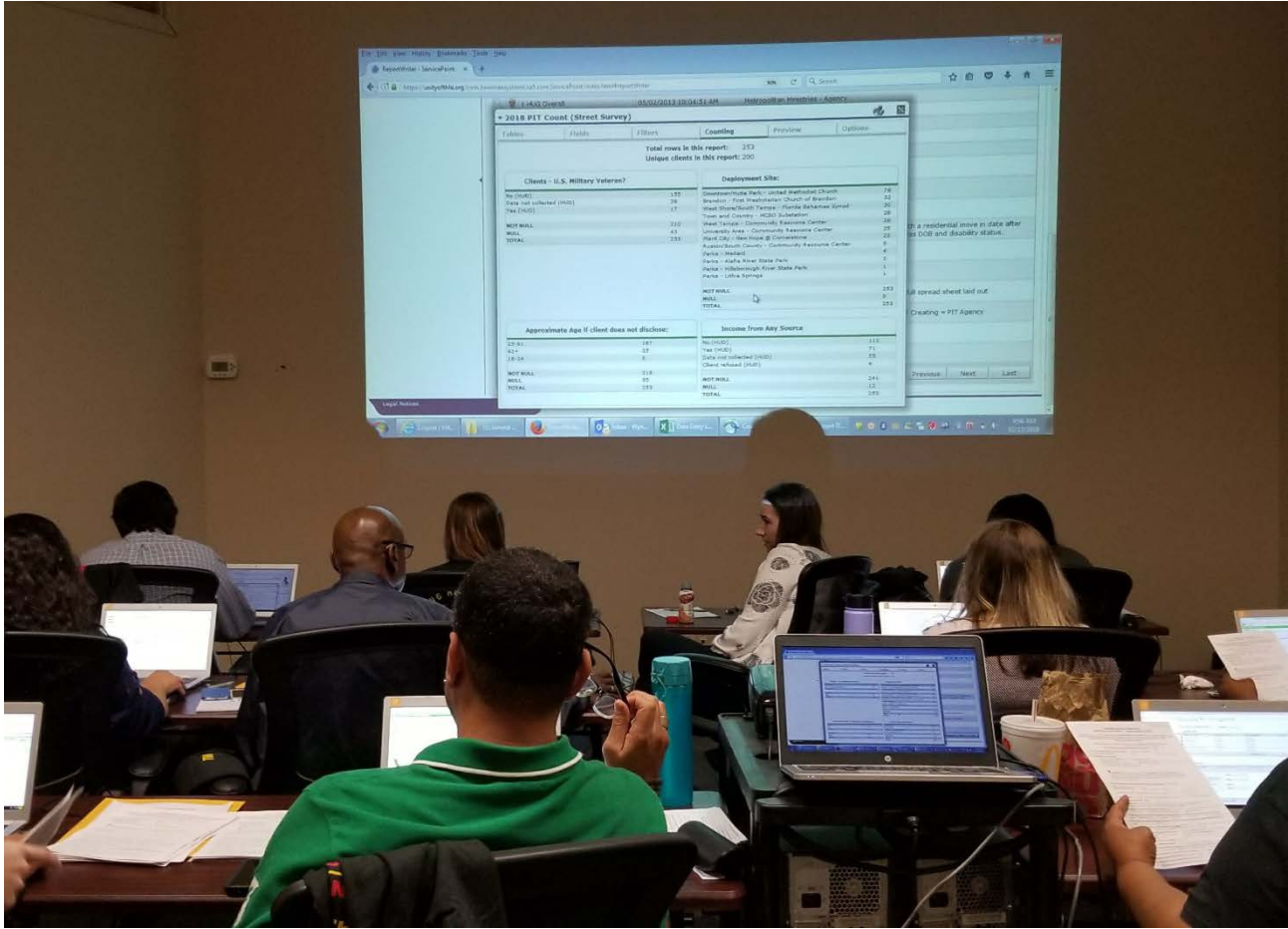| Unsheltered Count: |
| --- |
| • Street Count (Complete Census)
• Service-based Count
• HMIS Data |

2018 Street Count Volunteers

2018 Data Entry Lab

Volunteer Training Options

In-person **Webinar** **Web-based Refresher**

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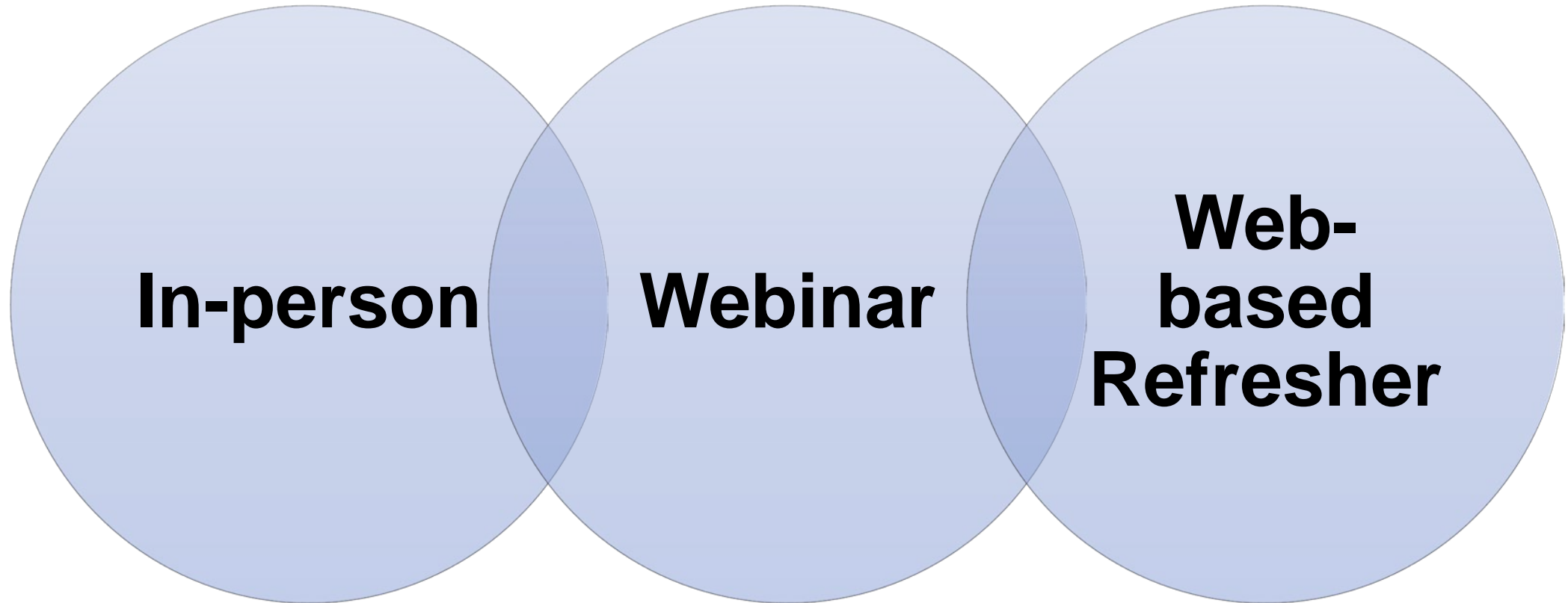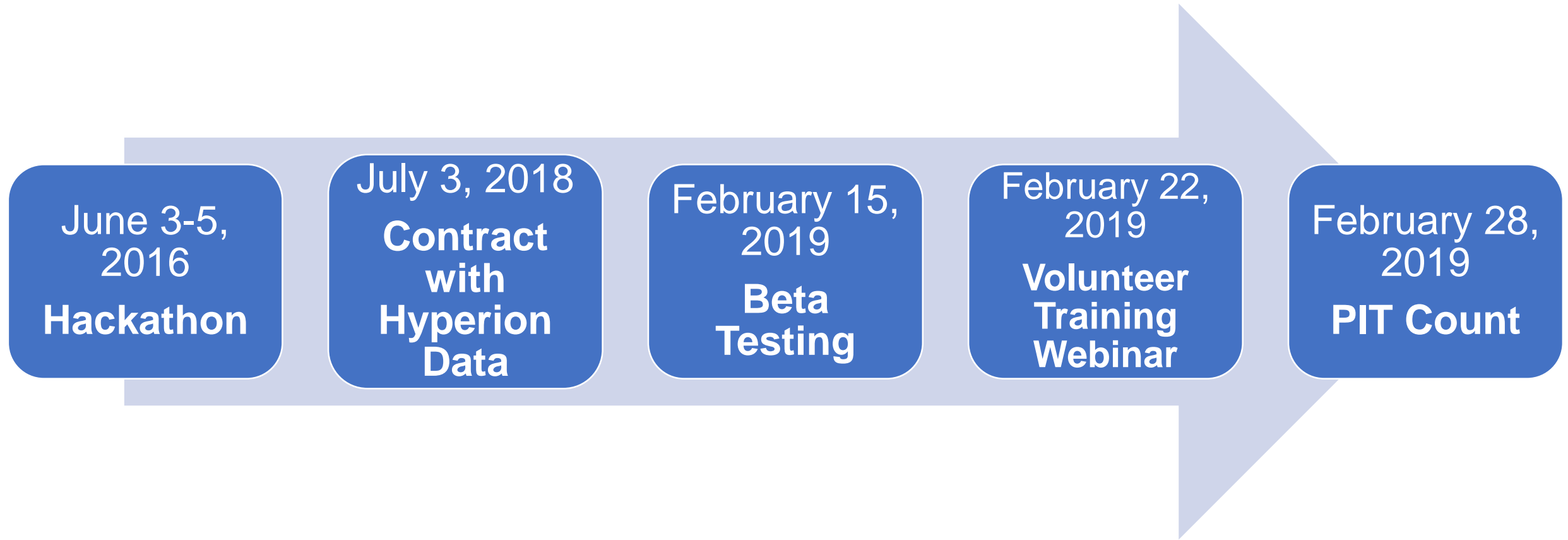
Why an Electronic PIT Survey?

- Save time and volunteers needed for data entry

- Improve data quality & access to real-time results

- Capture more accurate encampment location information

- Save trees!

Initial Reservations

- Would volunteers be open to using their personal devices <u>and</u> data for this purpose?

- Would we create barriers to volunteer participation?

- How would persons being surveyed perceive the use of personal devices?

Development Process

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Development Timeline

June 3-5, 2016
Hackathon

July 3, 2018
Contract with Hyperion Data

February 15, 2019
Beta Testing

February 22, 2019
Volunteer Training Webinar

February 28, 2019
PIT Count

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Homeless Solutions Hackathon

"Gimme Shelter" themed CodaPalooza event June 3-5, 2016
- In conjunction with 2016 National Day of Civic Hacking
- Held by Tampa !nnovation Partnership and Code for Tampa Bay
- Teams of two or more developers
- Chose from 10 modules addressing homelessness
- Competed to develop technology-based solutions

More info:

https://tampainnovation.com/2019/03/13/codapalooza-leads-to-improvements-in-homeless-survey-process/

Homeless Solutions Hackathon

- 120 people participated in teams of 2 or more
- Coders behind THHI's Electronic PIT Survey
  = "TEAM SUPPORT"
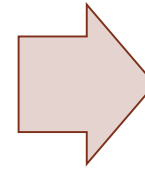- Code created for the app during Hackathon available on GitHub: https://github.com/code-for-tb/PITCensus

TEAM SUPPORT's Electronic PIT Survey App took 2nd Place

Hackathon to Development Contract

THHI released Request for Proposals that included deploying and testing the app
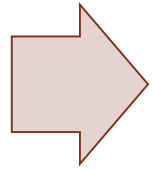
Different company selected, BUT was unsuccessful

Reached back out to the original developers and contracted with them

Contract included deliverables to:
- Get the app ready for use, including adding encryption
- Monitor the app during the 2019 PIT Count
- Export complete data set following the Count

Contract to Complete Development

- Additions to the base app:
  - Identify and set up server hosting and sub-domain
  - Encryption for privacy protection
  - Stress testing
  - Survey customization
  - Provide documentation for training, troubleshooting, and customization

Technical Details

- Cloud Server hosting: **Amazon Web Services**
- Survey development: **SurveyJS** https://surveyjs.io
- Other Components:
  - PyMongo and MongoDB to store the data from the surveys in the database
  - PyGal to create the charts for the data

Key Features

Conditional Logic

GIS Tracking

One-click data export

User-friendly design

App Testing

- First round of testing completed internally by developers
- Beta Testing 2 weeks prior to Count
  - 20 minute time period
  - Invited volunteers to test the app
  - ~20 volunteers submitted 54 surveys during the test
  - Volunteers provided feedback about usability and functionality

App Training for Volunteers

- Webinar Training for App about 1 week ahead of the Count

- Encouraged volunteers to attend training

- Webinar recording made available for all volunteers

- If a volunteer did not receive app training, we still let them try it out on the day of the Count

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Day of Count Experience

- Electronic Survey used by about 30% of volunteers (more than 100 volunteers)
- Use included:
  - Street Count Volunteers
  - Service-based Count
  - School social workers
  - Park Rangers
- **No issues reported throughout the day**
- Real-time data displayed at the COMMAND CENTER

Impact and Outcomes

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Unsheltered Count

Old Process

- 300 – 500 Volunteers
- 600 – 800 Paper Surveys collected
- Surveys entered into HMIS by Data Entry Volunteers
- Data exported for analysis

New Process

- Volunteers enter survey data on their Cell Phones/Tablets
- Significantly reduced need for Data-Entry Volunteers
- One-click data export

Impact

- ✓ Streamlined data collection

- ✓ Reduced data entry time

- ✓ Increase accuracy of data

- ✓ GIS Locations for improved maps

- ✓ Real-time data available

COMMAND CENTER

- **Real-time data displayed at COMMAND CENTER**

- **Social Media Campaign:** Partnered with Sparkman Wharf & The Corners Pizza to give free pizza to volunteers

- **Opportunity to engage** with general public and volunteers

- Sparkman Wharf now regularly provides the space to non-profits free of charge

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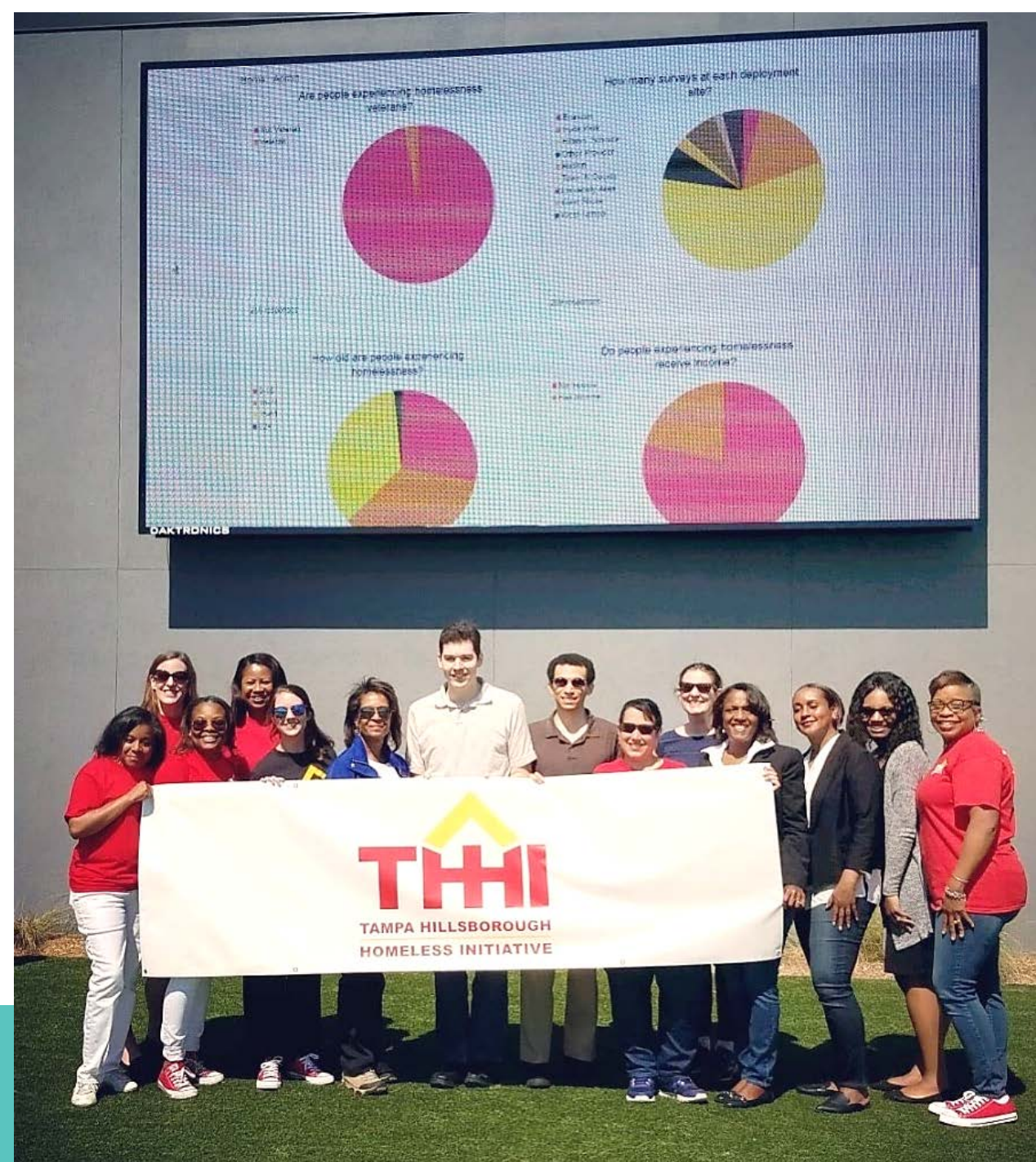
School District Involvement

- 39 School Social Workers at public high schools participated
- Surveyed all McKinney-Vento eligible students
- This year they used the electronic survey app
- Hillsborough County School District Homeless Liaison is **key** to this success
- Dashboard created using school data to facilitate conversations within school district

Volunteer Feedback

"LOVED the online survey and training related to that."

"It felt like less of a barrier with a phone instead of a clipboard."

"From a user-perspective, it was less cumbersome than the paper surveys"

View a blog highlighting the Electronic Survey here: https://trinitycafe.org/do-i-count/

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Moving Forward

- Electronic Survey will be primary tool for the 2020 Count

- Training on Electronic Survey will be included in all volunteer trainings

- Paper surveys will remain an option

Start Using an Electronic Survey Locally

- THHI's Electronic Point-in-Time Count Survey code is available open source on GitHub
  - https://github.com/unityhmis/PITCensus

- Host a "Hackathon" event locally
  - Connect with local innovation and technology groups

- Research ready to use Point-in-Time solutions

- The option that's right for your CoC depends on a variety of factors

Questions or Comments

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