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Georgia Library Spotlight - Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Library Hotspot Lending Program

Erica Rosalle
PCOM, ericaro@pcom.edu

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GLA SPOTLIGHT

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine Library Hotspot Lending Program

There is no doubt that the COVID-19 Pandemic has hit students hard. The Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) Georgia student community experienced sudden lifestyle adjustments such as reduced income sources, which affected the acquisition of necessities like food, housing, and transportation. During this unique period, many students suddenly found themselves in need of stable and affordable internet access to attend classes. The PCOM Library decided to tackle this item by implementing a hotspot lending program with the goal of removing a barrier to student success during this difficult time.

In August of 2020, the PCOM Library applied for and received a \$15,000 grant from the National Library of Medicine (NLM) to purchase the initial batch of hotspots. In September of 2020, the library acquired 11 hotspot devices through

Mobile Beacon, a service that specializes in providing hotspots to nonprofit organizations such as libraries. A team of library staff, led by Barbara Wood, MLIS, administered the hotspot lending program across their three campus libraries. Interested students were invited to fill out a survey to determine need, and hotspots

were distributed to students based on those results. Each hotspot loan lasted for one term in the hope that as many students as possible would be able to take advantage of the program.

The response from the student community to this initiative was enthusiastic. By the end of fall term 2020, the PCOM Library already had a waiting list of students hoping to participate in the spring; for both fall and spring terms, all hotspots were checked out. The PCOM Library plans to expand the program for

the upcoming academic year by adding seven hotspots to the collection.

To learn more about the library and its programs, visit the library website at <https://library.pcom.edu/>

