

In today's digital world, how do we make sure no one is left behind?

Bridging the digital divide:
FY21 year in review

**Insights, learning and
the way forward**

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The better the question. The better the answer.
The better the world works.

EY

Building a better
working world



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At Ernst & Young LLP, we believe business can be a force for social good

In July 2020, Ernst & Young LLP (EY US) launched our *Bridging the digital divide* initiative, a journey to support underserved students and other populations by joining forces with organizations to facilitate access to devices, broadband internet service and mentoring.

Too often in the US, a student's or worker's potential is limited by geography or economic circumstances. *Bridging the digital divide* isn't just about opening doors; its purpose is much bigger. The initiative is an integral part of EY US' **social justice commitment**, which is to take decisive action to eradicate racism and discrimination by leveraging our influence to drive strategic change in our firm, in the communities where we work and support policies that promote digital readiness.

This report summarizes the progress we've made in our first year of bridging the digital divide, including our greatest challenges, successes and the impact we've made on our communities. We don't purport to have all the answers, but we want to be leaders in the public discussion by asking the right questions and facilitating much-needed collaboration between the public and private sectors.

Whether you're part of an organization looking to make an impact or stepping up as an individual, there's an opportunity for us all to make a difference. When it comes to the pursuit of racial and social justice, there's no finish line, just a long-standing commitment to build a better world.



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Part 1

The journey so far

Bridging the digital divide: the journey so far

Systemic racism, discrimination and injustice are a human rights crisis. We vow to continue to be a force and a voice for a more just and equitable world.

EY US is taking actions to eradicate racism and discrimination by leveraging our influence to drive strategic change within our organization, in the communities where we work and through public policy.


One area we feel passionate about addressing is the digital divide that disadvantages so many underserved communities, making it impossible for people of color to fully participate in the modern economy and society.

With the assistance of dedicated staff and resources, we empowered 80-plus EY US offices across the country to study the problems and work to effect change in the best and most impactful way for their communities.

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Nearly *half of Americans* without at-home internet were in **Black and Hispanic households.**

Harvard Business Review,
“How to Close the Digital Divide in the U.S.”



Building access to better lives in Baltimore

Dr. Sonja Santelises, CEO of Baltimore’s public schools, talks with Arun Subhas, EY Baltimore Office Managing Partner; and Kevin Brown, EY Bridging the Digital Divide Executive Sponsor, about the firm’s impact on underserved students during the pandemic. Watch the video [here](#).

What is the digital divide?

The digital divide describes the gap between households with and without access to computers and broadband internet connectivity. This problem became more apparent and aggravated during the COVID-19 pandemic, as schools, jobs and business transactions migrated to online platforms. Many students simply did not have the hardware and connectivity needed to learn and perform to their full potential.

35%

of low-income US homes with children do not have high-speed internet.

25%

of students do not have a desktop or laptop computer at home.

17%

of students lack computers needed to complete their homework.

Source: Pew Research Center, American Community and Family Survey, NCES

EY US' *Bridging the digital divide* initiative launches

As part of our social justice commitments, EY US began reaching out to clients and not-for-profits in July 2020 to create powerful public and private sector coalitions. Our goals were:

- ▶ To provide devices and broadband for students to connect to the internet
- ▶ To engage our professionals as virtual mentors focused on navigating education disruption brought on by COVID-19. This included working with underserved students and their families to manage online connectivity and new devices, maximize online learning, apply to and navigate financial sources to pay for college (including EY College MAP scholarships) and connect with socially distanced internships.

EY US' *Bridging the digital divide* initiative follows a "now, next and beyond" strategy that applies our consulting acumen with an eye toward social inclusion. "Now" focuses on working

with other organizations to support students, families and educators to provide digital devices and broadband access. "Next" is a stabilizing phase in which virtual mentorship creates a path to training skills and future life readiness that can be elevated to transform communities for the "beyond."



Mentoring matters

Connectivity and devices alone cannot solve the digital learning gap. The private and public sectors are critical in the community effort to support access to education for underserved youths and develop future generations of talent through mentorship.

Youths with mentors are more likely to aim higher. That means participating in sports, attending college, taking on leadership roles and volunteering in their communities.

We know the importance of mentorship firsthand, given EY US' long-standing programs to increase opportunities for underserved youth. In conjunction with *Bridging the digital divide*, programs such as **our flagship College MAP (Mentoring for Access and Persistence)** deliver on our commitment to support the next generation. EY College MAP matches employee volunteer mentors with groups of 11th and 12th graders in underserved high schools throughout the US so they gain access to college and succeed. The program demystifies the process of applying to and paying for higher education and encourages students who might not otherwise have considered it an option. We then work with students to build the skills and confidence they need to persist in completing their post-secondary goals.

EY College MAP has been hailed as one of the most innovative and high-impact corporate volunteer programs focused on mentoring in the US. To date, our volunteers have mentored more than 2,000 underserved students across 38 US cities.

The data shows powerful results: 99% of EY College MAP students nationwide graduate from high school and matriculate to colleges and universities or promising trade and military careers (compared with 72% of their relevant peer group).

We're also engaging EY professionals as volunteer mentors through other impactful programs, such as **Network for**



Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE), a global nonprofit that brings the power of entrepreneurship to youths in low-income communities. Another top collaborator is **Junior Achievement**, the world's largest organization dedicated to educating students in grades K-12 about entrepreneurship, and fosters work readiness and financial literacy through experiential, hands-on programs. Third-party collaborators **iMentor** and **United Way** are key as well.

One in three youths grows up without a mentor of any kind.

MENTOR, the unifying champion for youth mentoring in the US, defines a mentor as: a "supportive adult who works with a young person to build a relationship by offering guidance, support and encouragement to help the young person's positive and healthy development over a period of time."

With the help of our corporate, public and nonprofit collaborators, the impact so far has been inspiring:

80+

cities where EY US has established *Bridging the digital divide* coalitions

\$4.3m

raised through public-private coalitions

\$1.5m

contributions to the United Way from our EY people to address the digital divide

72.5k

hours of online mentoring to underserved students since start of the pandemic provided by EY community mentors through programs such as EY College MAP (exceeding our goal of 40k)

78k

laptops delivered to underserved students through our EY College MAP program and *Bridging the digital divide* initiative

75k

underserved students connected to the internet via subscriptions or hotspots provisioned







Part 2

Insights and
questions
as we move
forward

Insights and questions as we move forward

The digital divide impacts the world beyond education, as many companies are digitizing their operations faster than ever.

Many crucial government, financial and telemedicine services have moved online. In addition, as many companies took advantage of the pandemic to drive digital transformation, the digital divide actually broadened, leaving more potential employees, customers and stakeholders unable to engage in the new digital world.

Who should lead the way in bridging the digital divide?

The digital divide is a larger problem than any one entity can solve. Efforts to address it require collaboration to be effective and impactful:

Broadband collaborators to provide connectivity to families in need	Hardware providers to find creative ways to offer devices at low or no cost	Local governments and school districts to align with existing educational programs	Nonprofits and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to provide the portfolio of services that families need to transition out of poverty and become stable participants in an increasingly digital world	Private enterprises to provide their convening power, skills-based volunteerism, technological and other expertise, and funding
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“Convener in chief”: necessary for success

From our experience in tackling the digital divide across the country, we found that efforts were most successful where there was a clear convener in chief providing the structure and incentives for each participant to work effectively toward a solution. This is a role most likely to be played by **government agency**, with the collaboration of **for-profit entities**, that will use the power of enterprise to provide efficient access to the various services and employment opportunities targeted for these families.



Why do we need to act now?

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare and exacerbated socioeconomic disparities that have plagued many communities for decades. To make matters worse, the pandemic caused many companies and organizations to accelerate digital transformation investments by two to five years, making digital access a necessity for engaging with employees, customers and other stakeholders.

For all of these reasons, everyone stands to lose if we don't act now to close the divide. Along with the risk of losing access to talent pools and customers, there are much greater societal implications of a larger and growing digital divide.

What does an effective business model look like?

Depending on the size of the territory, economic conditions, demographics, levels of income and existing infrastructure, a number of strategies are appropriate for bridging the digital divide. Examples include:

- ▶ Mentoring through existing or new structures
- ▶ Federal or state funding (e.g., American Rescue Plan, federal broadband infrastructure legislation)
- ▶ Donations from not-for-profits, charities, corporations and individuals
- ▶ Donations, grants and in-kind funding
- ▶ Networks that are wireline, wireless, fiber, 5G, WiFi, or other technologies
- ▶ Broadband infrastructure solutions (negotiated with existing providers or procured with new providers)

What kinds of multi-entity collaboration can accelerate progress?

Within the broader framework, private sector organizations can provide the vital funding, skills-based volunteerism, technical expertise and convening power to make a positive impact. Through our work, we have found that intentional collaboration is most effective when it begins within a city or region. From there, integrated international collaboration fuels funding, investment, innovation and execution.

[Learn more about how EY local teams are making impact in their communities.](#)

What can the public and private sector do to support and develop infrastructure and digital training?

As more options for broadband and device access emerge from existing telecommunications and hardware providers, the focus must turn to mentoring, training and support services offered by both the public and private sectors.

Our observations found that a successful solution and implementation require an effective governance model with visibility at all levels.

Public and private sector collaboration at work

Examples include:

- ▶ **Backbone networks** – Open access ties together diverse networks.
- ▶ **State networks** – In Kentucky, the State Network bridges distance to allow students to connect and collaborate.
- ▶ **Subsidy programs** – New York state's Broadband Program Office (BPO) uses a reverse auction method to support high-speed internet access to underserved areas of New York state.
- ▶ **Public-private collaborations** – Through a collaboration with Transit Wireless and other providers, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority's underwater Canarsie Tunnel has full connectivity for riders.
- ▶ **DOT networks** – Wired broadband facility encroachments are being allowed within California highway rights-of-way to benefit the public.



How does a more digitally inclusive society benefit communities, economies and businesses?

A digitally inclusive society brings increased efficiency and innovation for all. Currently, many governments are supporting two operational models: a digitally enabled model and an analog model. An example is the smart public transportation fare management program in New York City, where indefinite analog support (MetroCard) is required at significant expense.

The unprecedented pace of digital transformation witnessed during the pandemic, while good, is exacerbating the digital divide, and the private sector can take a more leading role to close the gap. For example, companies that now perform their operations through automation – with insight from AI and machine learning – should be intentional about creating strong, transparent and insightful engagement with stakeholders in new ways. Another example: as financial institutions pivot to provide more of their services online, investing in financial literacy offerings to help new customers will be important and impactful.

New digital solutions, if appropriately supported, have the potential to address the growing equity divide across numerous spectrums, including health, benefits, permits, transportation and education.

What is the impact of an interconnected community on international growth?

Expanding the breadth of digital access provides an opportunity to make much needed socioeconomic progress in communities that have been historically hard to reach. This creates a connected community that produces opportunities to learn, innovate and earn in ways like never before, and facilitates an increased standard of living.

As virtual connections tear down more and more physical barriers to learning, service delivery and commerce, the pace of innovation will accelerate with better access to insights, while the cost of innovation will decrease with more digitalization.

Digital technology alone doesn't guarantee success. Success requires structural change and the right resources. What can stakeholders do to support and develop infrastructure, digital skills training and accelerate innovation?

Organizations can start by looking inward to determine their unique strengths and what role they can play within the larger framework. Here are some recommendations:

- ▶ Rethink collaboration, competition and physical barriers to connecting with stakeholders
- ▶ Look for possibilities in nontraditional places. For example, the next big idea may not come from someone with a college degree or from a developed community.

Change won't happen overnight. We envision a three-step process that embraces the "now, next and beyond" approach to address infrastructure needs and training:



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Organizations can start by looking inward to determine their unique strengths and what role they can play within the larger framework.

How should national policies and regulations evolve?

Policies need to evolve in a way that fosters structured collaboration that yields to innovation and access to connectivity and devices. Investment costs will be high and may be better recouped if spread across more geographies. Upgrading and expanding existing networks, in addition to new innovative solutions, should be considered.

What other considerations should be taken into account when looking strategically at solving the digital divide?

Vital services and sectors of the economy continue to move online, driven in part by the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is crucial that all Americans have access to the internet and the basic digital readiness skills to fully participate in today's society. Such skills are needed now to access critical economic, health, employment and educational resources. As governments seek to address the digital divide by promoting broadband deployment and adoption and by providing internet-enabled devices, **training and mentorship in digital readiness must be part of the solution.**

Government policies should fund digital readiness training and mentoring programs; develop digital readiness materials and best practices; address the specific needs of minority communities that have been left behind; and track the performance of programs so that resources can be effectively deployed and produce the intended results.

Click to learn more about our [EY Digital Readiness Public Policy considerations](#).

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Part 3

Success
stories
that inspire

Mapping digital divide success in 2020-21

Places where we're delivering connectivity, hardware and mentoring to make a difference and bridge the digital divide

Building ambassadors in San Diego, CA

We are collaborating with the local government and other leading organizations to develop opportunities for students in a Promise Zone. EY US also designed a program to mentor more than 100 high school juniors and seniors, and collaborated with Junior Achievement on a 10-week ambassadors program on financial literacy, workforce readiness and entrepreneurship.

Opening doors to education in Seattle, WA

We launched a series of ongoing tutoring programs with After-School All Stars and Young Executives of Color (YEOC). We also initiated United Negro College Fund's (UNCF) Portfolio Project, a college readiness program to engage youth in pursuing post-secondary education.

Providing language accessibility in Nashville, TN

EY Spanish-speaking professionals helped Junior Achievement create virtual training materials to support work readiness and financial literacy for students. Our team also collaborated with the Boys & Girls Clubs and PENCIL, a local school supplies nonprofit, to provide cybersafety training to middle school students.

Group mentoring and student workshops in Rochester and Syracuse, NY

Our teams participated in local EY College MAP mentoring and the national program, College Persistence for North East. They also led student workshops at the entrepreneurial

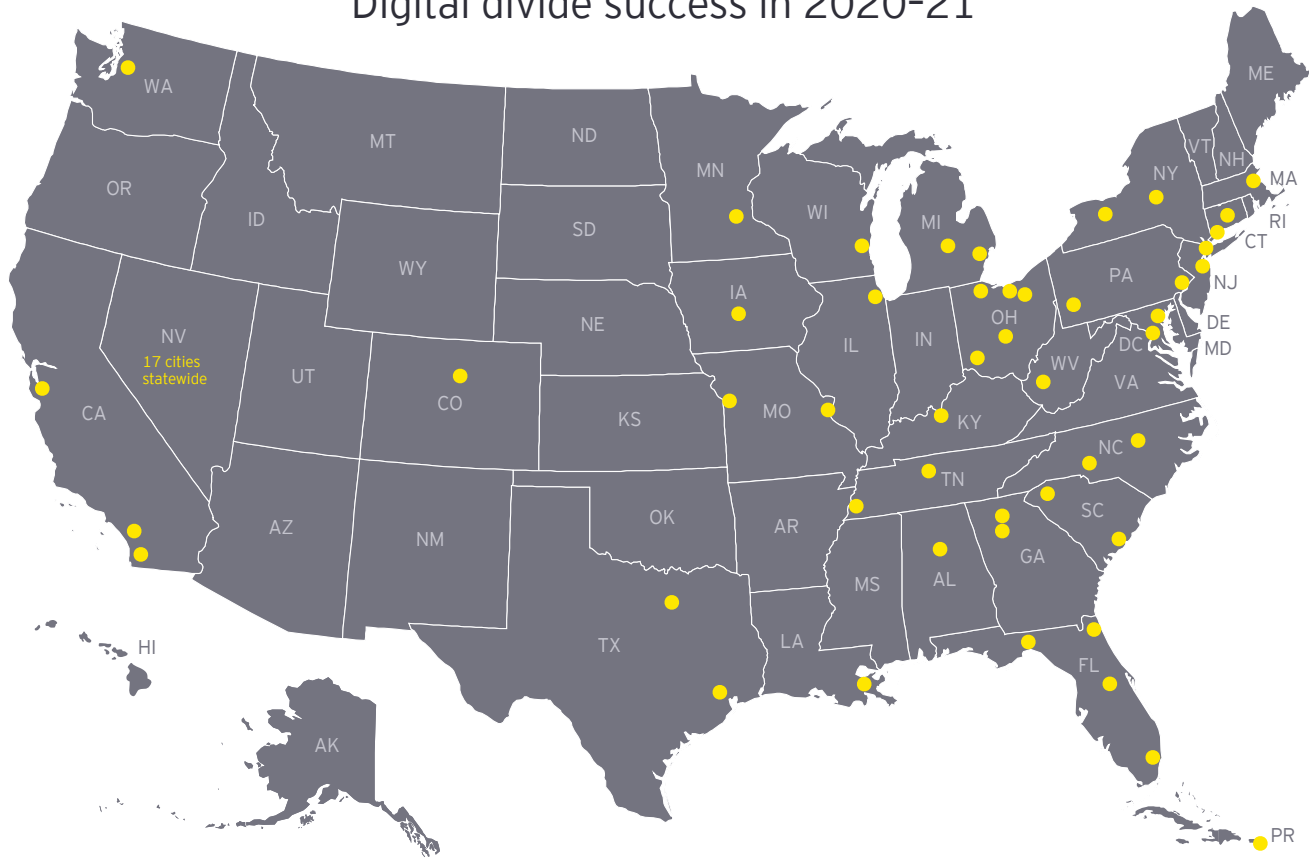
Youth Summit, and developed educational videos to support the ongoing work of Junior Achievement.

Connectivity and real-life preparedness in Cincinnati, OH

EY US connected with an organization to empower children experiencing homelessness and give opportunities through education and enrichment. They raised \$3,500 to give 69 students tablets and connectivity. Teams also hosted a resume prep session with underserved students at the Cincinnati College Preparatory College. They felt confident in skills and life/job experience after the session. [Watch video: Learn how EY Cincinnati keeps students connected to learning opportunities with essential resource support.](#)



Digital divide success in 2020-21



Hands-on work experience in Irvine, CA

Our teams coordinated with the CEO Leadership Alliance to develop a six-week virtual internship to provide students with business line experiences – and they continue to explore synergies between our United Way and Junior Achievement relationships. [Watch video: Learn how EY Irvine provides mentoring opportunities for students that help inspire career exploration.](#)

Mentoring for digital literacy in greater Washington, D.C.

We coordinated with the National Capital United Way to allocate \$51,000 of EY-United Way funds toward 100 hardware devices. Comcast donated an additional \$20,000 to support 330 families with a year of broadband service. Now our teams are providing mentoring to those same families and running workshops across six elementary schools to promote digital literacy. [Watch video: Eugene Kim, EY Senior Manager, Assurance, talks about supporting families with necessary devices for digital learning.](#)

Making a twofold impact in Iselin, NJ

We collaborated with TDI Connect, a nonprofit that refurbishes and disburses devices to areas of need and the Princeton YMCA. We used our initial funds of \$6,000 to provide a device and year of internet service to 40 families, and then most recently held a computer drive where we supported at least 60 local families with “new” computers that will provide 3-5 years of support. We have also engaged our clients for an even greater impact.

Funding and resources for families in Akron, OH

EY US donated \$25,000 and collaborated with the United Way to open its third Family Resource Center (FRC). Through the FRC, families can access basic needs support, parent and caregiver support groups, health and wellness programs and more.

Technology tools and training in Denver, CO

EY US worked with Mile High United Way to allocate \$30,000 raised by EY contributors to procure 60 hardware devices and 60 hotspots. We also provided 1,200 hours of support to families and conducted a four-week tech training for parents. Today, fundraising and mentoring are ongoing through Junior Achievement and EY College MAP.

Promoting digital inclusion in San Jose, CA

We worked with the local government, Silicon Valley Leadership Group and the private sector to form a Digital Divide Task Force. As a result of this collaboration, the San Jose Digital Inclusion Fund raised more than \$1.9 million to provide more than 32,000 students with devices and connectivity.

Fulfilling hardware needs in Hartford, CT

Our teams worked to address the hardware needs for Camp Courant and the Boys and Girls Clubs by setting up an EY fundraiser with a goal of reaching \$20,000 to provide 50 laptops split across the two organizations. [Watch video: Learn how EY Hartford provides meaningful technology access for students and a look forward to future initiatives.](#)





Tech equity for teens in Minneapolis, MN

EY US entered into a three-year collaboration agreement with a leading national consumer electronics retailer to establish a “Teen Tech Center” in Minneapolis, with a formal launch expected later this year. The mission of the Teen Tech Center is to improve tech equity among teens in disinvested communities. Through this collaboration, we’re committed to improving tech equity by giving teens unparalleled access to:

- ▶ Cutting-edge technology, resources and training to make, create and innovate
- ▶ Mentors and peers who inspire new passions and possibilities
- ▶ Technical training and college guidance support that clear paths and open doors

The \$100,000 sponsorship and collaboration in the Teen Tech Center directly invests in our communities and creates another opportunity for EY professionals to engage in skills-based volunteer programs impacting youth and helping close the digital divide.

Connecting families in Philadelphia, PA

We designed an agreement with the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey to allocate \$55,000 to provide 400 families with hardware and 135 families with internet credit via technology bundles. We also initiated the

Connect25 program, allowing EY employees to donate funds to support PHLConnected. [Watch video: EY Philadelphia leaders discuss programs and campaigns that helped families in their region.](#)

Realizing our convening power in Charlotte, NC

We raised \$250,000 to support COVID-19 relief and *Bridging the digital divide* efforts. Additionally, through our convening power, we were able to raise \$4,000,000 to provide Charlotte-Mecklenburg students with hardware and connectivity. Our commitment helped to provide 16,000 Chromebooks and 16,000 hotspots to Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system students.

Launching access in Stamford, CT

An EY US/United Way fundraiser raised more than \$12,000. These funds provided free internet access for one year to more than 70 students from a local school.

Breaking new ground in Chicago, IL

We collaborated with the United Way on Chicago Connected, a first-of-its-kind program that provides no-cost high-speed internet service to Chicago Public Schools (CPS) students and their families. It’s one of the largest efforts by any city to provide internet access for students. EY volunteers and CPS are reaching out to families in underserved communities to continue to enroll them in the program. We also donated \$25,000 to Big Shoulders Fund to provide hardware to students.

Bridging the gap through collaboration in New Orleans, LA

We convened with a digital cable television and telecommunications company, New Schools for New Orleans, and the nonprofit Providence Community to bridge the connectivity gap.

Promoting career readiness and connectivity in New York, NY

Through an agreement with United Way New York City, we provided \$100,000 to the Mott-Haven school district in the Bronx. This will provide 500 high school students with hardware,

and Verizon will provide five years of connectivity to the students. NYC will also serve as executive sponsor to Junior Achievement Virtual Inspire, which impacts thousands of students through career readiness events. **Watch video:** [Learn how EY New York provides mentoring, community organization and general support to bridge the digital divide in their region.](#)

A city-spanning initiative in Nevada

EY US served as the auditor and accountability enabler of Connecting Kids, a state COVID-19 taskforce created to address the digital divide. Through convening, consulting, volunteering and CARES Act funding, the coalition worked to address challenges in 17 cities across Nevada. More than 120,000 public schools benefited, and EY mentoring continues through Junior Achievement and EY College MAP.

Collecting devices in Atlanta/Alpharetta, GA

EY US is running a device drive for the upcoming school year and providing skills-based volunteering. We're also collaborating with InspirEDU, a local nonprofit that refurbishes laptops and provides educational software.

Getting connected in Birmingham, AL

We teamed with Restoration Academy to provide mentoring. EY US also is working with the United Way to provide laptops and connectivity for students.

Teaming for a better future in Charleston, WV

EY US, West Virginia University and state and local governments are jointly developing hardware, connectivity and mentoring solutions.

Safety first in Cleveland, OH

When COVID-19 shut down schools in Cleveland, many students were without access to remote learning. EY US and the United Way worked swiftly to create safe spaces for students to learn. **Watch video:** [See how academic learning pods came to life.](#)

Mentoring forthcoming in Columbus, OH

EY US is working with InsurTech Ohio on a series of events for the insurtech community. We hosted an event focused on exit strategy for C-suite insurtech leaders from around the Midwest. EY US and the United Way together are determining the best mentoring solutions locally.

Focusing locally in Des Moines, IA

We collaborated with United Way to donate to Genesis Youth Foundation and Mediacom, which provide connectivity and hardware. EY US also is consulting with organizations identified by the United Way to provide mentoring in the fall.

Driving connections in Detroit, MI

EY US donated \$80,000 to provide laptops and connectivity to four shelters for homeless people. We're also teaming with the United Way to offer mentoring, laptops and connectivity to students and their families.



Developing job skills in Grand Rapids, MI

We're working with Talent 2025 on job skills development for students and parents.

Taking a holistic approach in Greenville, SC

EY US is collaborating with the United Way to determine a holistic approach to overcoming the digital divide for students. We're part of a committee of local executives to promote racial equity and economic mobility, in conjunction with the Greenville Chamber of Commerce.

Teaming broadly in Jacksonville, FL

We're supporting local efforts with public, private and nonprofit sectors, including Junior Achievement, the United Way, Duval County Public Schools, Parent Academy, Sanctuary on 8th Street and 5C Academy. We have donated \$10,000 to purchase laptops for students from the 5000 Role Models Project.

EY US will be donating an additional \$10,000 for laptops for an after-school program attended by children at Sanctuary.

Watch video: [Learn how EY Jacksonville collaborates with public and private entities to bridge the digital divide.](#)

Getting started in Kansas City, MO

EY US is joining with key stakeholders in the community to identify the best way to maximize resources.

Twice as nice in Louisville, KY

We are collaborating with the United Way to match mentors with students. The participants meet twice per week for one hour each session.

Strategy developing in Memphis, TN

EY US is working with the mayor's office, the United Way and other local nonprofits to develop a digital divide strategy.

Exploring collaborations in Miami, FL

EY is working with the CEO of Miami Foundation to identify mentoring opportunities, and plans to launch a United Way campaign in the coming year for Miami Dade Public Schools.

\$100,000 investment in Milwaukee, WI

EY US is connecting with local stakeholders to support hardware and connectivity donations. We're also in talks with EY College MAP to provide laptops to seniors at Milwaukee Academy of Science. We donated \$25,000 for a civil rights and urban advocacy program to double the number of laptops it can provide to graduating seniors pursuing post-secondary education. The gift is part of a larger \$100,000 investment in the community that we're making to address racial inequities.

Watch video: [Learn how EY Milwaukee collaborates with a local charter school to cover costs of hardware for digital learning and provide volunteers for academic assistance through College MAP.](#)

Working with the United Way in Orlando, FL

We are working with the United Way as it develops digital divide strategies for Mackenzie Scott donations. EY US also donated \$7,500 to a Central Florida civil rights and urban advocacy organization for technology upgrades.



Tech center donation in Pittsburgh, PA

EY US donated \$20,000 to a technology center to support local students and is working with a local high school to provide mentoring support.

Identifying the best path in Raleigh, NC

Together with various stakeholders in the community, we are identifying the best path forward to provide hardware, connectivity and mentoring.

Mentoring in San Juan, PR

EY US is teaming with a local nonprofit to provide mentoring support to students with disabilities.

Digital divide approach in St. Louis, MO

The EY St. Louis office has worked in conjunction with the United Way of Greater St. Louis to allocate money received during our campaign for the digital divide to fund mini-grants and involvement opportunities for our professionals with organizations, providing direct support to the community for help with technology, wireless access and other key areas. Long-term goals are being established to drive a sustainable approach to helping bridge the digital divide in St. Louis.

New tech center in Tallahassee, FL

EY US and the South City Foundation planned, designed and implemented a tech center for the residents of South City – complete with computers, desks and internet access. We're also planning a fundraising drive for devices in the fall.

Optimum impact in Toledo, OH

We are working with EY College MAP to identify opportunities where we can make the most impact.

Giving with an entrepreneurial approach in Dallas, TX

Teams designed a "Shark Tank" approach to allocate EY-United Way funds of more than \$100,000 to four local organizations aimed at closing the digital divide. The organizations pitched their solutions to more than 200 EY donors, who voted on





which initiatives to support. In addition to much-needed funding, the event generated volunteering opportunities through United to Learn and John Neely Bryan Elementary School.

Boston success story

The EY Boston office, in collaboration with their local United Way, participated in a City of Boston program addressing youth homelessness called “Rising to the Challenge.” Within this program, they used funds raised to purchase connectivity “kits” for this group which included Chromebooks, headsets and backpacks. EY volunteers then assembled the kits and provided virtual mentoring for onboarding content with tips for how to use the machines, connect to WiFi hotspots, and bookmark key City of Boston resources. [Watch video: Learn how EY Boston sources funds and devices for students in their community.](#)

Houston success story

In Houston, the EY team helped bridge the digital divide with a fundraising campaign and a renewed relationship with third-party organizations, including United Way. Our efforts provided opportunities for EY professionals to offer mentoring to students in need. We support United Way, Junior Achievement and Big Brothers Big Sisters. Through United Way, we raised over \$100k and are working to give students laptops and connectivity. Also, our volunteers mentored on finances, technology, and career readiness. [Watch video: Learn about EY Houston’s multiprong approach to bridge the digital divide.](#)

Baltimore success story

The EY Baltimore office connected with the CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools to help bridge the digital divide. First, we put EY professionals on advisory councils in the city school district. Second, we put EY PPEDs in social service and nonprofits to serve students. Third, we raised funds through United Way. EY professionals mentored 450 students on future and career readiness, volunteered with NFTE and iMentor, and through the Baltimore City public school system provided two financial literacy sessions. [Watch video: Learn how EY Baltimore provides mentorship resources for students in need.](#)



EY | Building a better working world

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