



## **AT&T Opens Connected Learning Center at Esperanza to Help Bridge the Digital Divide in the Cleveland Community**

*New center will help bridge the digital divide through greater connectivity, devices and digital learning resources for students and parents of Esperanza*

CLEVELAND, Dec. 15, 2021 – As part of our \$2 billion [commitment](#) to address the digital divide, AT&T\* is opening a new Connected Learning Center in Cleveland to provide internet access and education tools to those who face connectivity barriers vital to their long-term success.

In Cleveland, it's estimated that more than [13,000 K-12 students<sup>1</sup>](#) don't have internet at home. AT&T is extending our reach into the communities most affected by the digital divide, starting with the opening of the **AT&T Connected Learning Center at Esperanza in Cleveland**.

"This Connected Learning Center is an important and welcome addition in the Clark-Fulton neighborhood," said **Cleveland Mayor-Elect Justin Bibb**. "We've seen how important digital connectivity is during the pandemic, when kids had to go online to learn. For adults, this is how you look for a job or send out a resume. Members of our families can only take advantage of tele-health visits with their doctor if they are online and connected. This center brings that connectivity to more of the people in Cleveland's urban core, and I thank Esperanza and AT&T for supporting this community."

Esperanza is a Cleveland-based nonprofit that provides free personalized mentoring, leadership building, comprehensive post-secondary and family support to the Hispanic students and families of Northeast Ohio.

The center will provide the students and families within Esperanza access to high-speed AT&T Fiber internet and Wi-Fi. As part of its ongoing commitment to championing digital inclusion for underserved communities, **Dell Technologies** will donate Dell OptiPlex computers and Dell monitors which feature integrated audio and webcams to support virtual learning. Additionally, **Overland-Tandberg**, a leading global technology and IT services company, will lead the onsite configuration of the computers. The company, a Black-owned corporation, is part of AT&T's [\\$3 billion Supplier Diversity initiative](#). The students and families will also have access to education content from collaborators like **Khan Academy** and mentoring support from AT&T employees.

This is the first AT&T Connected Learning Center we're launching in Cleveland and we plan to open an additional center within the area. In all, we plan to open more than 20 centers across the country. Centers will be housed within local organizations that support underserved populations, including some of our nation's most vulnerable students and families.

"Through this collaboration with AT&T, we're able to provide essential connectivity and digital resources to some of our most vulnerable students and families," said **Victor Ruiz**, executive



director, Esperanza. “The AT&T Connected Learning Center will give our families access to high-speed internet connectivity, computers, digital tools and educational content to help them participate in virtual learning, apply for jobs and set them up for socioeconomic success in the future.”

“AT&T’s investment in the AT&T Connected Learning Center at Esperanza is a reflection of the company and its employees’ ongoing commitment to addressing the digital divide in our neighborhoods,” said **Tony Costanzo**, director, AT&T Ohio External Affairs. “AT&T is committed to the city of Cleveland and with this Connected Learning Center, we will provide critical connectivity and digital resources to connect some of Cleveland’s underserved students and families to today’s digital world.”

For students and their families who lack the skills to effectively use the internet or digital technologies, we’re offering access to free digital literacy education courses. Together with the **Public Library Association**, we’re launching a curated series of digital literacy courses to help those who are newly connected build skills and confidence to use computers and mobile devices safely and responsibly. These courses will be offered [online](#), at AT&T Connected Learning Centers and at public libraries.

We also continue to help make broadband more affordable for millions of eligible households, including in Cleveland. Families can sign up for discounted connectivity through the \$10/month Access from AT&T broadband offering or can get temporary discounts on internet through AT&T’s participation in the federal [Emergency Broadband Benefit \(EBB\) program](#).

Working closely with educators and government leaders, we can help connect communities and reimagine the future of schools. That’s why we are committed to providing comprehensive, agile and affordable solutions for Education Institutions, Libraries and Government entities to connect students, teachers, library patrons and underserved constituents. Since March 2020, AT&T has connected more than 600,000 students and teachers, across 50 states, in collaboration with departments of education, school districts, and higher education institutions.

In addition to our community investment in Cleveland, we also continue to invest in bringing fiber and connectivity to this area. From 2018-2020, we expanded coverage and improved connectivity with a nearly \$350 million investment in our wireless and wireline networks in the [greater Cleveland area](#). In the state of Ohio, AT&T Fiber is available in Cleveland and [more than 75 other Ohio communities](#).

We currently offer fiber to over 15 million customer locations in more than 90 U.S. metros, and plan to increase our current fiber footprint to cover 30 million customer locations by year-end 2025.

Learn more at [att.com/connectedlearning](https://att.com/connectedlearning).

Learn more about [Esperanza](#).



<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://digitalbridgek12.org>

**\*About Philanthropy & Social Innovation at AT&T**

We're committed to advancing education, creating opportunities, strengthening communities and improving lives. As part of our companywide 3-year, \$2 billion commitment to address the digital divide, we launched AT&T Connected Learning to invest in connectivity and technology, digital literacy and education solutions to help today's learners succeed inside and outside of the classroom. Since 2008, we've committed more than \$600 million to programs that help millions of students across all 50 states and around the world, particularly those in underserved communities.

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