



# ADVANCING DIGITAL EQUITY

Newsletter | May 2022

In a recent article in the nonprofit journal, CommonWealth, Senator Ed Markey and Tech Goes Home co-CEOs Daniel Noyes and Theodora Hanna wrote, “The solutions to persistent digital inequity must be thoughtful and co-created in deep partnership with the individuals and communities that are most impacted.”

We couldn’t agree more. At ECCF, we like to say that great solutions come “for, from and by the community.”

And this is exactly what is happening throughout Essex County as part of our Advancing Digital Equity Initiative. And people are excited about it. The enthusiasm spreading across the region is palpable. We see it during meetings of our digital equity coalition, now over 150 strong. And we witnessed it last month at the Digital Equity Challenge, co-led by ECCF and the UMass Lowell Innovation Hub Haverhill, with support from EforAll Merrimack Valley, the UMass Lowell RIST DifferenceMaker Institute and Pentucket Bank.

This was an extraordinary opportunity to see the innovation taking place right in our own communities. The pitch competition gave us the chance to learn about 15 inventive projects to help increase access to the tools and training people need to participate in the digital world. The evening was filled with networking, camaraderie and creativity, and its success is a result of great partnerships. Our goal is to continue this event to give more community-based innovators the opportunity to earn seed funding to bring their projects to life and help bridge the digital divide. You can read more about the Digital Equity Challenge, and the winners, in a link below.

So much has been accomplished, but this is only the beginning. We are on a journey together to listen and learn, to grow our cross-sector partnerships, to meet people where they are and to strive to create a region where all residents have equitable opportunities to thrive.

Thank you for joining us.

Stratton Lloyd  
Kate Machet



Stratton Lloyd  
Executive Vice President & COO



Kate Mchet  
Director of Strategic Initiatives

## News and Updates from ECCF

### **ECCF, Tech Goes Home, The Philanthropic Initiative Talk Digital Equity at National Conference**

May 27, 2022 | ECCF Press Release



Earlier this month, ECCF and its partners, Tech Goes Home and The Philanthropic Initiative, were selected to speak about Advancing Digital Equity at the Grantmakers for Effective Organizations' 2022 National Conference in Chicago. The trio spoke about the collaborative work to bridge the digital divide in Essex County through systems change, a model ECCF applies to all its community leadership work.

[Read the full article.](#)

### **Federal Funds, showcasing progress highlights of ECCF's Digital Equity Coalition meeting**

April 6, 2022 | ECCF Press Release



At the March 31 meeting of the Essex County Digital Equity Coalition, Josh Eichen of the Massachusetts Broadband Institute at the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative was on hand to give an overview of federal funding for digital equity and to talk about how his organization is preparing for the influx. MBI will administer \$50 million of the federal funds that are in the pipeline for Massachusetts.

[Read the full article.](#)

### **'This is right where ECCF wants to be'**

April 6, 2022 | ECCF Press Release

"This partnership with the UMass Lowell Innovation Hub and EforAll has been a tremendous opportunity to see the type of



# Innovation Hub

innovation that is taking place right here in our own communities as we seek collaborative ways to bridge the digital divide for people living in the 34 cities and towns of Essex County.”

-Kate Machet, ECCF’s director of strategic initiatives

[Read the full article.](#)

## ECCF In The News

### Northshore Conversations: Digital Divide

March 26, 2022 | Northshore Enterprise Radio Show



Kate Machet, ECCF’s director of strategic initiatives, and Stephanie Guyotte of the UMass Lowell Innovation Hub Haverhill join North Shore Conversations host Laura Swanson to discuss the Digital Divide and how ECCF is working with organizations like UMass and others to bridge the gap between Essex County residents with access to technology and those who lack the tools and resources to fully engage in our increasingly digital world.

[Listen to the full interview.](#)

### Contest aims to bridge digital divide by expanding computer access and literacy

March 11, 2022 | The Boston Globe



ECCF is partnering with UMass Lowell and nonprofit EforAll to seek innovative solutions from the community to help bridge the digital divide.

“We’re always looking for solutions that come from the communities,” said Kate Machet, the foundation’s director of strategic initiatives. “We hope this contest inspires entrepreneurial collaboration to address all these issues.”

[Read the full article.](#)

## More Digital Equity News

### Progress being made on digital inequity — but more needed

March 11, 2022 | Commonwealth

Digital inequity isn’t new, and policymakers, advocates and community-based organizations have been working together to address the challenge for decades. Right now, in the context of COVID-19, we have a unique opportunity to

create more robust funding streams and advance comprehensive, inclusive solutions that result in closing the digital divide once and for all.

[Read the full article.](#)



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