

Bridging the Digital Divide Together

Your Support Matters

Bridging the Digital Divide During a Pandemic

by Chéri Pierre, CEO of Computers 2 Kids

Who knew that in March of 2020, the world would shut down? Global lock-downs, skyrocketing unemployment, and virtual school learning became the world's new normal.

Working in the nonprofit arena, you learn to do more with less, stretching your resources, and thinking outside-of-the-box, all skills that proved handy during the COVID-19 Pandemic. But a nonprofit's success is not theirs alone - it takes a community. And what a community we have!



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COVID-19 has shed a spotlight on the digital inequity, with almost 30 million Americans trying to complete their education or work online without access to a computer and the Internet.

Beginning in the first week of the Pandemic, **Computers 2 Kids** was flooded with requests from parents desperately searching for computers to help their child pivot to the new at-home learning protocol. Thanks to immediate support from **The San Diego Foundation's COVID Relief Fund**, **Computers 2 Kids** hired an additional fifteen IT Technicians to help meet the growing demand.

Knowing that technologically disadvantaged students would fall severely behind in their studies, the **Computers 2 Kids** team, following strict PPE guidelines, began working 10-hour days, six days a week to fill the ever-growing shortfall from the uninterrupted school closures.

More electronic donations were needed, and thanks to electronics drives, like the **"Meet the Need"**

Computer Drive hosted by the **San Diego Regional Chamber**, **Cox Communications**, **District 6 Councilmember Chris Cate**, and the **San Diego County Office of Education**; and **Qualcomm's** annual **#DigitalGiveBack Drive**, **Computers 2 Kids** continued to have enough computers for the growing needs of the technologically disenfranchised.

As the Pandemic continued to force students without computer access to fall further behind, **Computers 2 Kids** began receiving requests for computers from disadvantaged communities throughout the United States. Once again, **Computers 2 Kids** pivoted our distribution model to incorporate applications from and shipping to recipients nationwide.

To help facilitate access for all, **Computers 2 Kids** will soon be launching our first of its kind **Technology Assistance Program (TAP)** app, generously funded by **Jeff and Annie Jacobs** and developed in partnership with **Develop for Good** (an intercollegiate nonprofit that pairs, trains and supports university student volunteers as they develop technical product solutions for nonprofits.) The TAP app will allow anyone with a phone to request a low-cost computer, apply for affordable Internet, and receive free

technical support for their **Computers 2 Kids** devices.

Throughout the Pandemic, San Diego based **Computers 2 Kids** has been one of the leading nonprofit refurbishers, distributing **more than 49,000 desktops and laptops** to struggling students nationwide.

Continuing to refurbish computers and distribute at this pace throughout 2020 and into 2021 has not been easy. **Computers 2 Kids** is lucky to have such a dedicated team of staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, and Founders **Tammy and Larry Hershfield**, ensuring our continued success.

Through the support of a dedicated community and donors like those mentioned above and others like **Crown Castle**, **Lucky Duck Foundation**, **Jewish Community Foundation**, **LPL Financial**, **Northern Trust**, **Rolf Benirschke Legacy Foundation**, **Sharps Health Plan**, **Sycuan Casino** and the **Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation**, the **San Diego Gulls Foundation**, and many, many more, **Computers 2 Kids** is quickly Bridging the Digital Divide.

On behalf of all of us at **Computers 2 Kids**, we **thank the community** for their generous support!

Can you imagine even *one day* not having access to a computer?



Make a difference easily with C2K
Call today (858) 200-9792



COMPUTERS 2 KIDS HELPS SAN DIEGO GAIN ACCESS FOR ALL

BY KELSEY BAIRD

As technology advances with developments like 5G wireless and the emergence of Smart Cities initiatives, it is critical that individuals are equipped with the digital tools and resources necessary to thrive economically and socially. However, historically San Diego's low-income neighborhoods have experienced unequal access to broadband, a process known as the digital divide. There are some 53,000 households in the city without fixed Internet at home, mostly in southern and southeastern San Diego. For example, in the San Diego Promise Zone (comprised of neighborhoods Barrio Logan, Logan Heights, Southeastern, and parts of East Village), nearly a quarter of residents lack fixed home internet, and 16%, almost twice the county average, lack adequate digital devices to meet household need.

The **City of San Diego's SD Access 4 All initiative** aims to close that digital divide for as many San Diegans as possible through innovative partnerships that expand opportunities for residents to get connected. **SD Access 4 All** takes a multi-faceted approach to digital inclusion by seeking to connect residents to affordable computers and low-cost Internet while simultaneously offering free digital skills training and technical support.



LEARN MORE ABOUT SD ACCESS 4 ALL, VISIT WWW.SANDIEGO.GOV/SDACCESS
LEARN MORE ABOUT COMPUTERS 2 KIDS, VISIT WWW.C2SDK.ORG

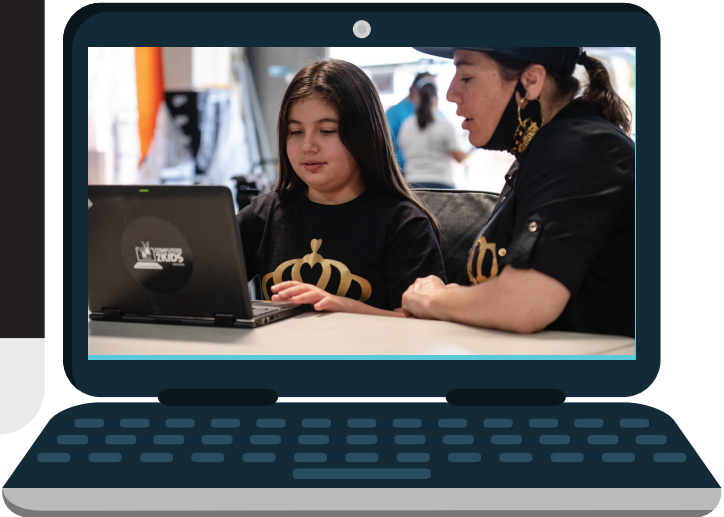
To kick-start efforts last spring, **Mayor Todd Gloria** announced the public roll-out of free Wi-Fi access to over 300 locations across the city, implemented through partnerships with the **San Diego Parks Foundation** and **Cox Communications**. The City also hired a local community outreach organization – **Pillars of the Community** – to help eligible households take advantage of the new federal **Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB)** program, which subsidizes home internet. Pillars encouraged and assisted individuals in signing up for EBB by executing a robust boots-on-the-ground campaign that worked to break down language barriers and provide technical assistance.

In January 2022, **SD Access 4 All** will be launching free Digital Navigator services and a digital literacy program in collaboration with trusted non-profits, **Computers 2 Kids** and the **San Diego Futures Foundation**. Instead of individuals having to navigate home access to the Internet, devices, and technical support on their own, a multi-lingual cohort of Digital Navigators will be in place to support residents over the phone and at easily accessible locations across San Diego, including libraries and recreation centers. A Digital Navigator is a trusted guide who assists community members in internet adoption and the use of computing devices, addressing the whole digital inclusion process - home connectivity, devices, and digital skills – with community members through repeated interactions (**National Digital Inclusion Alliance**).

Through this program, residents will be connected to **Computers 2 Kids**, a national leader in providing low-cost devices to underserved families. The City sought out a collaboration with **Computers 2 Kids** because they demonstrate proven experience with device donation, sanitation, and security, and are committed to the experience of the end-user, ensuring top value and a sense of ownership.



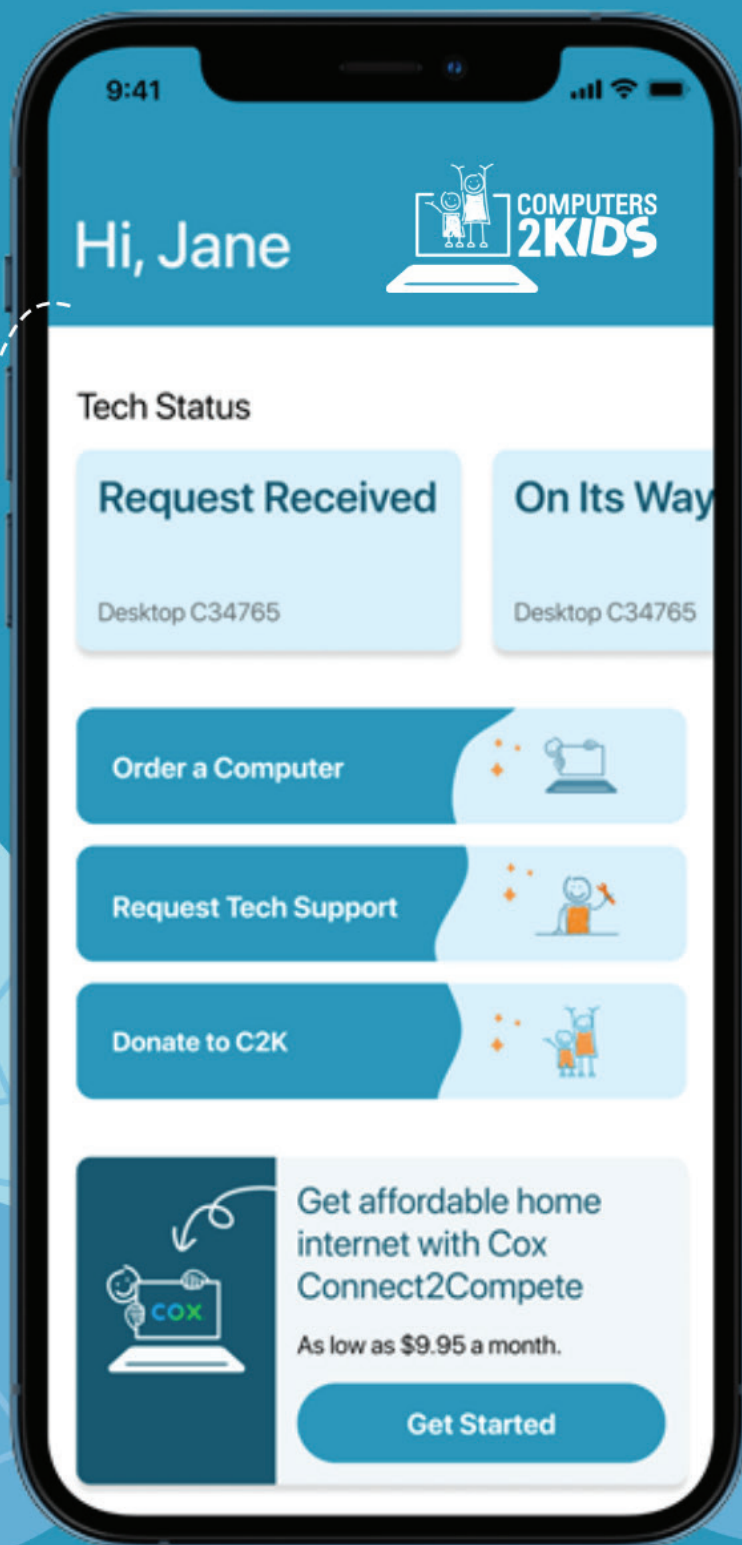
DONATE YOUR ELECTRONICS TODAY



TECHNOLOGY AT THE TIP OF YOUR FINGERS



Buy computers, get tech support and manage all your devices
Introducing Computers 2 Kids' new app



Available soon on



www.c2sdk.org

QUALCOMM'S #DIGITALGIVEBACK

Finding an environmentally friendly solution for your company's used computers and other hardware can be challenging. For the last nine years, **Qualcomm Incorporated** has collaborated with **Computers 2 Kids**, to donate its no-longer-needed, out-of-warranty, but still functioning company hardware.

The IT department's process for donations of company hardware focuses on security, confirming that all hard drives are removed from any machines prior to donation, and accountability - confirming receipt of each donated asset after pickup.

"Our hardware donations are very important to our company as they support the community and help to keep our environment green," Terry Hornig, IT Support Tech, Specialist, at Qualcomm Incorporated.

Here are several best practices that **Qualcomm** follows that other companies could consider when setting up a similar program:

1. Create a policy or guidelines that determine how donations are handled and which nonprofit organizations, like **Computers 2 Kids**, are considered eligible for donations.
2. Establish a selection and approval process for asset donation and an internal process for preparing the asset(s) for donation.
3. Set up an internal process for the release of the asset(s) to the nonprofit.
4. Host personal e-waste collection events and campaigns in partnership with the nonprofit.

The pandemic challenged **Qualcomm's** ability to host personal e-waste events on-site, and exacerbated the effects of the digital divide as connectivity became a lifeline for students forced into remote learning. According to Pew Research Center, one in five teens are unable to complete homework assignments due to a lack of access to a device or the Internet at home. In response to these needs locally, **Qualcomm's** Corporate Responsibility department launched a campaign to encourage its employees and the community to donate and drop off personal devices to **Computers 2 Kids** to help support students in need, and close the digital divide.



During **Qualcomm's** **#DigitalGiveBack** campaign in late 2020, more than 770 computing devices (desktops, laptops, and tablets), 170 monitors or screens, and more than 4,000 pounds of other hardware were donated

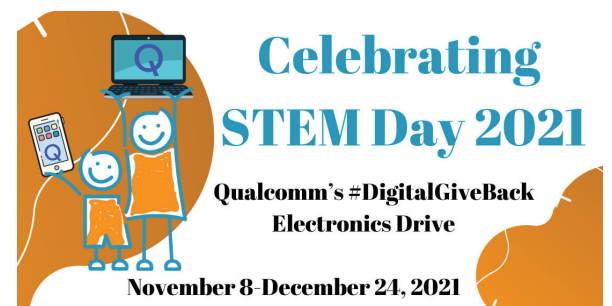
to support **Computers 2 Kids'** efforts in closing the digital divide.

"**Computer 2 Kids** has helped provide thousands of local families with the devices they need to ensure all students can continue their learning, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic," said Natalie Dusi, Manager of Government Affairs at Qualcomm Incorporated. "We are proud of our employees and community partners for their generosity, demonstrating our commitment to bridging the digital divide."

The second year of the **#DigitalGiveBack** campaign launched on November 8 and continues through December 24. For more information on how to donate, visit the **#DigitalGiveBack** webpage at: <https://www.c2sdk.org/digitalgiveback/>

COMPUTERS 2 KIDS' DATA SECURITY PROTOCOL

All items donated to **Computers 2 Kids** that store data are sanitized in compliance with the Department of Defense Sanitization Standards as outlined in the National Industrial Security Program Operating Manual DoD 5220.22-M.



THANK YOU, DONORS!

Your generosity helped get **almost 50,000 computers** to students schooling from home!

Computers 2 Kids' staff has been encouraged and humbled by the remarkable people, organizations, community groups, small businesses, and corporations that have all stepped up to support our low-income students with used computers, laptops, electronics, and monetary donations.

TO US, YOU ARE OUR HEROES

We thank you for helping us meet the challenges of these times



To learn more about C2K, please visit c2sdk.org. To discuss how you can support getting a computer into the home of a student in need, email Price@c2sdk.org



BUSINESSES OF ALL SIZES CAN HELP COMMUNITIES BRIDGE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE GAP

BY COX COMMUNICATIONS

Most Californians (96.3%) have access to a broadband network to connect them to the internet at home, but some households are still living without internet or computers.

For households like Cathy Baggs's, the digital divide isn't about access. It's about broadband adoption. The City Heights resident, who is the primary caregiver for her grandson, Joshua, had options to internet providers, but says she wasn't able to afford a computer or internet service – until she attended a computer and internet sign-up event co-hosted by **Computers 2 Kids (C2K)** and **Cox Communications**.

At the event, Baggs learned about available programs that make it easier for low-income households to purchase refurbished computers and low-cost internet for families with school-age children. Now Baggs and Joshua have a refurbished desktop computer and internet service.

Closing the Digital Equity Gap

The pandemic put a spotlight on the digital divide and how it affects students trying to learn online and adults trying to apply for jobs or further their education – not just in San Diego County, but nationwide. Fortunately, **Computers 2 Kids** and **Cox Communications** had already been partnering for nearly a decade to close the digital equity gap.

Since 2012, the nonprofit and the technology company have worked together to get low-income families with children in grades K-12 connected to the internet.

As a nonprofit device partner of **Cox's Connect2Compete** program, **Computers 2 Kids** distributes refurbished computers, laptops and tablets to families and **Cox** connects them to low-cost internet service for \$9.95 a month that includes in-home wifi. **Cox** also helps San Diegans access federal Emergency Broadband Benefit discounts.

"Since 2012, C2K and Cox have worked together to bring affordable computers and internet to low-income families"

Prior to the pandemic, **Computers 2 Kids** and **Cox** regularly held computer distribution and sign-up events at local schools and community centers. When COVID-19 hit the county and forced social distancing and stay-at-home orders, they had to halt in-person sign-up events. But they continued to work with schools and the community as the demand for technology increased with distance learning and work from home requirements.

To help meet the high volume of requests for devices during the pandemic, **Computers 2 Kids** and **Cox** held a computer and e-waste drive at **Cox's main campus in Southeast San Diego**, as well as a week-long drive at **Cox Solutions Store** locations throughout the county. The public and businesses were able to drop off their computers, laptops, tablets, printers, keyboards and other e-waste that was collecting dust in the office or garage.

Computers 2 Kids refurbishes the technology for those in need, including low-income households with young children, seniors, military

families and college students.

In 2020, through a \$250,000 donation of cash and in-kind services, **Cox** helped **Computers 2 Kids** distribute 30,000 devices to San Diegans in need so families like Cathy Baggs's were no longer part of the digital divide.

Having a computer and internet at home has helped her grandson, Joshua, quite a bit, especially with remote learning. According to Baggs, "He's learned better research skills, so now he doesn't have to ask grandma about everything. The bigger monitor is good, too, because I can easily supervise him when he's playing Roblox."

She's also trying to help others in a similar situation. "I've been telling all of my friends, 'You can get affordable computers for your kids, you can get free tech support. There are programs to help you afford internet service,'" said Baggs. "Because so many of them just don't know about it."

To learn more about low-cost internet programs through **Cox** visit: www.cox.com/c2c -or- www.cox.com/digitalequity.



If you are a business with devices to donate for refurbishment or to learn more about **Computers 2 Kids** visit www.c2sdk.org.



Forty million tons of electronics are recycled every year. This number is not enough to cover the massive breach that divides those without access to technology.

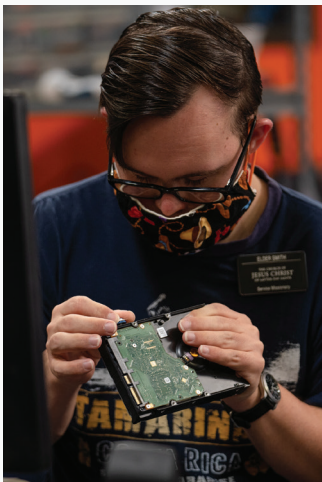
If you are a business or individual, donate your used electronics to Computers 2 Kids and turn them into impactful tools for the education of vulnerable children and their families.

You can also contribute by making a monetary donation. Did you know that donating \$100 to C2K can help provide a schooling student a computer?

MAKE YOUR DONATION COUNT!

Contact Patricia Rice at PRice@c2sdK.org or (858)200-9792 to learn more





"I enjoy the chance of working with my hands, getting to know new people and giving back to the community"

DENISE BRITTON
VOLUNTEER AT C2K

BECOME A
VOLUNTEER TODAY
(858) 200-9791



JOIN THE
C2K TEAM
NOW
HIRING



CONTACT (858) 200-9791
OR EMAIL
TPERRY@C2SDK.ORG

COMPUTERS 2 KIDS LEADS SAN DIEGO'S DEVICE EFFORTS TO BRIDGE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

BY DIGITUNITY

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, **there are over a million households in California without a computer.** In San Diego county alone, nearly 70,000 households do not possess a desktop or laptop computer. Like broadband access, device ownership is critical for families to benefit from the vast opportunities the internet can provide.

Technology reuse is an extremely effective means of getting free or low-cost devices to those who may need them. San Diego's **Computers 2 Kids** is a highly effective nonprofit organization laser-focused on making refurbished, previously used technology available to school-age children and their families. This work helps to close what has become known as the **"homework gap,"** the difficulty millions of students have in completing school assignments due to a lack of adequate technology access and related supports.



Digitunity, a national nonprofit organization focused on advancing device ownership, is pleased to partner with **Computers 2 Kids** on a two-year, ten-city pilot project to eliminate the homework gap. Funded by **AT&T**, the project will help bolster, accelerate, and expand work already being done in cities to ensure long-term device ownership solutions for children and families. San Diego has been selected as one of the pilot cities.

"The San Diego community is looking forward to supporting C2K's role in this project to help those in need within our community."
Kelsey Baird, City of San Diego's Access 4 All Initiative.

This 10-city pilot project is part of **AT&T's "Connected Learning"** portfolio of work, as it expands efforts to bridge the digital divide in communities across the nation. They have made a \$2 billion commitment to bridge the digital divide over the next three years through efforts that promote broadband affordability, accessibility, and safe adoption.

Outcomes of the project will include increasing donations of technology to city partners, like **Computers 2 Kids**, that can be refurbished and distributed at no or low-cost to families with K-12 aged children. The project will also result in a number of positive environmental impacts as previously used technology is utilized to help students in need instead of being destroyed, and unusable donated technology is recycled responsibly. **Digitunity** has been engaged in technology reuse and supporting a national network of service delivery organizations since the mid-1980s.

Computers 2 Kids and **Digitunity** have been working together since 2005 to promote the reuse of technology to benefit children and families. **Computer 2 Kids** is a member of the **Alliance for Technology Refurbishing and Reuse (AFTRR)**, a program of **Digitunity** that brings together a collective of nearly 90 like-minded, similarly-focused nonprofit technology refurbishers across North America for a collective impact. **AFTRR** member organizations share the common goal of collecting, refurbishing, and distributing donated, gently used technology to families in need, along with skills development and support.

Digitunity wholly believes that those most affected by the digital divide should have the largest voice in shaping the solutions that make sense for their needs. In its role as a national coordinator, **Digitunity** is eager to work with **Computers 2 Kids** and the San Diego community to accelerate their efforts to eliminate the homework gap. One of the ways that we are helping to do this is by sponsoring **Kelsey Baird**, Digital Equity Coordinator for the City of San Diego as a NTEN Digital Inclusion Fellow. Kelsey is aligning her outstanding work with San Diego organizations, including **Computers 2 Kids**, with the pilot project.

San Diegans are invited to participate in the project, and can do so in a variety of ways:

- **Donating corporate devices:** San Diego businesses are encouraged to contact **Computers 2 Kids** to donate surplus, retired, or inoperable desktops, laptops, tablets, and accessories. **Computers 2 Kids** will safely and securely refurbish and distribute devices to qualified recipients. For businesses with multiple locations spanning several cities, **Digitunity** is set up to help coordinate your participation in this project.
- **Donating your own individual devices:** Individuals with retired or surplus devices are encouraged to utilize **Digitunity's** online Donation Matching Platform to find a local organization in need of technology or donate directly to **Computers 2 Kids**.
- **Volunteering with Computers 2 Kids:** To support device drives, provide digital literacy instruction, or help with refurbishing.
- **Supporting Computers 2 Kids digital inclusion efforts:** Through peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns, employee matching, and direct financial contributions. Call (858) 200-9792 for more information.

Digitunity is proud to support the work of **Computers 2 Kids** and congratulates them for their impressive, ever-growing impact on the San Diego community and beyond.

Digitunity, an initiative of the **National Cristina Foundation**, has connected corporate and individual donors of technology to thousands of partner organizations serving people in need across North America. With a proven body of work and a national network of member organizations, **Digitunity** is working to ensure all barriers that limit the equitable opportunity to participate in our digitally-connected society are removed. Learn more at www.digitunity.org.



Donovan and Mia are excited to use their computer to complete their homework (2020)



**SUPPORT COMPUTERS 2 KIDS TODAY
AND HELP END THE DIGITAL DIVIDE FOREVER**

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON,
HELP COMPUTERS 2 KIDS

Tech the halls

WITH TOOLS FOR LEARNING



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