

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

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COMMUNICATIONS EQUITY AND DIVERSITY COUNCIL

DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT AND INCLUSION WORKING GROUP

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"LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PANDEMIC"

ROUNDTABLE ON BROADBAND ACCESS, AFFORDABILITY  
AND DEPLOYMENT

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THURSDAY

MARCH 23, 2023

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The Roundtable convened via  
Videoconference, at 10:00 a.m. EDT, Jamila Bess  
Johnson, CEDC Designated Federal Officer,  
presiding.

PRESENT

JAMILA BESS JOHNSON, Designated Federal  
Officer,

Communications Equity and Diversity  
Council, Media Bureau

HEATHER GATE, CEDC Chair; Vice President,  
Connected Nation

CLAYTON BANKS, CEO, Silicon Harlem

JOSHUA BREITBART, Senior Vice President,  
ConnectAll NY

GRETA BYRUM, Principal for Broadband and Digital Equity, HR&A Advisors  
BRODERICK JOHNSON, Executive Vice President, Public Policy; Executive Vice President, Digital Equity, Comcast  
THU NGUYEN, Executive Director, OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates  
ANNETTE TAYLOR, Director, Office of Digital Equity and Literacy, North Carolina Department of Information Technology  
OVIDIU VIORICA, Broadband & Technology Program Manager, New Mexico Public School Facilities Authority  
SARAH KATE ELLIS, President and CEO, GLAAD  
STEPHAN ADAMS, President and CEO, Virgin Islands Next Generation Network (viNGN)  
NORMA FERNANDEZ, CEO, EveryoneOn  
ANISA GREEN, Director, Federal Regulatory Chief of Staff - EVP; Federal Regulatory Relations & Chief Regulatory Officer, Corporate External & Legislative Affairs, AT&T Services, Inc.  
THOMAS KAMBER, Founder and Executive Director, Older Adults Technology Services (OATS)  
JI SOO SONG, Digital Equity Advisor, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Technology  
HAL WOODS, Chief of Policy, Kids First Chicago  
DOMINIQUE HARRISON, Chair, CEDC Digital Empowerment and Inclusion Working Group; Representing Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

**AGENDA**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Opening Remarks and Presentation</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Panel 1: Availability, Affordability, Deployment</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Panel 2: Adoption and Digital Readiness</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Closing Remarks</b>	<b>172</b>

1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 (10:00 a.m.)

3 MS. JOHNSON: Good morning, my name  
4 is Jamila Bess Johnson and I serve as the  
5 designated federal officer for the  
6 Communications Equity and Diversity Council of  
7 the Federal Communications Commission.

8 Welcome to today's roundtable on  
9 "Lessons Learned from the Pandemic" on  
10 broadband access, affordability and deployment.  
11 We expect to have an engaging and informative  
12 discussion with experts from across the  
13 country.

14 Including from community  
15 organizations, federal agencies with emergency  
16 broadband funding, state agencies and internet  
17 service providers. Shortly you will hear from  
18 Ms. Heather Gate, Vice President of Digital  
19 Inclusion for Connected Nation, who services as  
20 Chair of the Communications Equity and  
21 Diversity Council.

22 Following Ms. Gate's opening

1 remarks, we will have Panel One on  
2 affordability, availability and deployment,  
3 which will focus on successful strategies that  
4 have been implemented to promote deployment of  
5 affordable and accessible broadband service  
6 during the pandemic.

7 We will have a short break in the  
8 roundtable at 11:25 a.m. Thereafter, Panel Two  
9 on adoption and digital readiness will help  
10 identify programs initiated during the pandemic  
11 to address to adoption and digital readiness as  
12 well as the opportunities that exist to scale  
13 successful programs.

14 We look forward to hearing from all  
15 of these impressive stakeholders. The  
16 Communications Equity and Diversity Council is  
17 a federal advisory committee rechartered in  
18 2021 by FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel.

19 The Council's mission is to make  
20 recommendations to the Commission on advancing  
21 equity in the provision of and access to  
22 digital communication services and products for

1 all people of the United States without  
2 discrimination on the basis of race, color,  
3 religion, national origin, sex or disability.

4 The Council has three working  
5 groups, Innovation and Access, Diversity and  
6 Equity and the planning working group for  
7 today's roundtable, Digital Empowerment and  
8 Inclusion. We thank the members of this  
9 working group, including the Chair, Dr.  
10 Dominique Harrison, for all of their efforts in  
11 developing this roundtable.

12 Lastly, a bit of housekeeping.  
13 During the roundtable members of the public may  
14 submit questions for the panelists. Please  
15 email your questions to [livequestions@fcc.gov](mailto:livequestions@fcc.gov).  
16 That's one word, [livequestions@ffc.gov](mailto:livequestions@ffc.gov), thank  
17 you.

18 It's my pleasure to now introduce  
19 for opening remarks the Chair of the  
20 Communications Equity and Diversity Council,  
21 Ms. Heather Gate, who is an Executive Vice  
22 President for Digital Inclusion at Connected

1 Nation. Good morning, Heather.

2 MS. GATE: Good morning, Jamila, and  
3 thank you very much to you and other designated  
4 federal officers, Diana Coho and Ashley Tyson  
5 for helping us to put together this fantastic  
6 program and everything that you do to keep us  
7 on schedule and on track to, and compliance  
8 with what we're supposed to be doing.

9 I want to begin by expressing my  
10 gratitude to Chairwoman Rosenworcel for her  
11 leadership. Her passion for advancing Digital  
12 Equity and for allowing us to use this FCC  
13 platform to conduct this important roundtable  
14 discussion.

15 Welcome to the CEDC's roundtable on  
16 the lessons learned from programming and  
17 interventions that helped to advance broadband  
18 access, affordability and development since the  
19 onset of the pandemic.

20 Thank you again to the Digital  
21 Empowerment and Inclusion working group for  
22 putting together this excellent agenda. Thanks

1 to our esteemed panelists for blessing us with  
2 your time and your experiences and your  
3 knowledge today.

4 We are incredibly honored that you  
5 agreed to join us today for this moment of  
6 reflection on the lessons learned from  
7 broadband related responses to the pandemic.

8 Why is this important? It's  
9 important because these lessons learned  
10 discussions allow us to transform our  
11 reflections on past successes and losses into  
12 actionable insights that help us to make more  
13 informed decisions in the future.

14 And why does it matter to the CEDC?  
15 It matters because we are charged with making  
16 recommendations to the FCC on advancing equity  
17 in the provisions of and access to digital  
18 communication services for all people of the  
19 United States without discrimination on the  
20 basis of race, color, religion, national  
21 origin, sex or disability.

22 What a great way to gather critical

1 information than to, that will help to inform  
2 our recommendation than to facilitate this  
3 roundtable. To listen and learn from those that  
4 played a key role in digital inclusion  
5 programming.

6 So, in helping to set the stage for  
7 today's roundtable, I am tasked with starting  
8 this discussion by talking about the injection  
9 of funding to address connectivity challenges  
10 exacerbated by the pandemic since early 2020.

11 Let's be clear, prior to the  
12 pandemic lockdowns we were living with the  
13 persistent digital divide that left others  
14 behind. Data showed that 16.5 million  
15 children, school aged children did not have  
16 access to adequate internet and computing  
17 devices at home.

18 Forty-two million Americans did not  
19 have access to broadband. Nearly 1.3 workers  
20 lacked the foundational digital skills they  
21 need to succeed. So, within that context the  
22 May 2020 COVID-19 lockdowns disrupted everyday

1 life as we know it.

2 Schools and businesses started to  
3 shutdown and people were sent home to  
4 quarantine. Exposing the digital divides to the  
5 world. According to a few research studies  
6 conducted during that time, 46 percent of  
7 parents from low-income households said that  
8 their kid did not have, would experience tech-  
9 related challenges in adopting distance  
10 learning.

11 But that's when we experienced a  
12 seismic shift in what we viewed as important  
13 and doable. In the words of the great composer  
14 Duke Wellington, "a problem is a chance for you  
15 to do your best."

16 Amazingly, in a matter of months we  
17 began to see key policy considerations and  
18 changes. The deployment of much needed devices  
19 to school children and more importantly, new  
20 funding from Congress to accelerate these  
21 activities.

22 So, and now I'm going to talk a

1 little bit about this funding that was  
2 triggered by the pandemic. So, if you don't  
3 mind, Ashley, launching the slides for me,  
4 please, okay. Next slide.

5 So, in March 2020 Congress passed a  
6 \$2 trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief and  
7 Economic Security also known as CARES Act,  
8 which created the Coronavirus relief fund. It  
9 provisioned \$150 billion for state, local and  
10 tribal governments to address connectivity  
11 challenges that they were facing from the  
12 pandemic lockdowns.

13 These funds were used to increase  
14 access to distance learning for school-aged  
15 children and college students to support  
16 telehealth services, deploy more than, to  
17 deploy more public Wi-Fi access points and to  
18 invest in residential broadband infrastructure.

19 Next was the Consolidated  
20 Appropriations Act of 2021, signed in December  
21 2020. It provisioned over \$7 billion to help  
22 improve connectivity in the United States and

1 this provision included funding for a temporary  
2 emergency broadband program for low-income  
3 households and the newly unemployed due to the  
4 pandemic called the Emergency Broadband Benefit  
5 overseen by the FCC.

6 This program provided a discount of  
7 up to \$50 per month for eligible consumers and  
8 \$75 per month for those living on tribal lands.  
9 It also provided a one-time device discount for  
10 up to \$100.

11 Another program was the Connecting  
12 Minority Communities Pilot Program. This  
13 program was designed to help increase the  
14 capacity of institutions that included  
15 historical black colleges and universities,  
16 tribal colleges and universities and minority  
17 serving institutions.

18 It helped to increase these  
19 institutions' technology capacity and it  
20 enhanced their services as technology hubs in  
21 their communities. Additionally, the  
22 Consolidated Appropriated Act of 2021 also

1 included funding for tribal connectivity and  
2 telehealth programs also overseen by the FCC.

3 In March 2021 Congress passed the  
4 American Rescue Plan Act, also known as ARPA.  
5 This included \$10 billion for Coronavirus  
6 capital project funds, \$7 billion for emergency  
7 connectivity funds.

8 The emergency connectivity funds was  
9 designated to help schools and libraries  
10 provide the tools and services that communities  
11 needed for remote learning during the COVID-19  
12 emergency period. It also included the  
13 Coronavirus state and local fiscal recovery  
14 funds.

15 And lastly, President Biden signed  
16 the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in  
17 December 2021 for \$65 billion. It included  
18 funding for \$42.45 billion for The Broadband,  
19 Equity, Access and Deployment, called the BEAD  
20 program, \$14.2 billion to make permanent the  
21 emergency broadband benefit under the name  
22 Affordable Connectivity Program.

1                   And it also included \$2.75 billion  
2                   for the Digital Equity Act program. Both these  
3                   programs require states to develop state  
4                   broadband planning and digital equity plans.

5                   So, a quick review of the federal  
6                   dollars flowing into communities in response to  
7                   the pandemic really shows a great desire and  
8                   motivation to lead to trigger recovery and  
9                   forge a new path to addressing challenges that  
10                  proceeded the pandemic. Next slide, please.

11                  This slide illustrates the upsurging  
12                  federal funding, specifically targeting states,  
13                  U.S. territories and tribal governments to  
14                  address the barriers to broadband adoption,  
15                  access and deployment.

16                  This is a once in a lifetime  
17                  opportunity for digital equity and inclusion  
18                  and if done right, it presents an opportunity  
19                  for us to tackle historical challenges related  
20                  to the digital divide and digital inequity.  
21                  Next slide.

22                  So, here's what we're likely to

1 learn from the roundtable today. The COVID-19  
2 pandemic lockdowns mobilized private companies,  
3 non-profits, associations, local and state and  
4 federal government to seek immediate solutions  
5 to the destruction, to disruptions in  
6 education, work and life.

7 This resulted in some wins. Over  
8 nine million households enrolled in the  
9 emergency broadband benefit. Over 16 million  
10 households enrolled, have enrolled in  
11 affordability connectivity program.

12 Though we have, we still have a lot  
13 of work to do. Eight hundred providers  
14 participated in the FCC's Keep America  
15 Connected Pledge. Public and private entities  
16 rallied to deploy computers, hotspots, Wi-Fi  
17 networks for students even outside that federal  
18 funding.

19 Over 50 states, territories and, are  
20 in the process of developing state broadband  
21 plans and digital equity plans that are  
22 designed to move the needle for digital equity.

1 Next slide.

2 So, today the CEDC welcomes, Digital  
3 Empowerment and Inclusion working group  
4 welcomes two fantastic panels to guide this  
5 discussion. I want to recognize the Digital  
6 Equity and Inclusion working group for putting  
7 together this tremendous agenda.

8 Specifically, Dr. Harrison, the  
9 Chair of the working group. Thank you to  
10 Vickie Robinson, Clay Banks, Clayton Banks and  
11 Sarah Kate Ellis for leading the charge in  
12 planning today's events.

13 Without further ado, I would like to  
14 introduce our incomparable lead for the  
15 workstream, Clayton Banks, who will be  
16 moderating our first panel and this first panel  
17 as our esteemed DFO mentioned is the panel on  
18 availability and affordability and deployment.  
19 Welcome, Clayton.

20 MR. BANKS: Thank you, Heather.  
21 What a great person you've been on this journey  
22 for all of us. Your leadership has been

1 extraordinary.

2 Good morning, good morning,  
3 distinguished members of the FCC led by our  
4 incredible Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel, our  
5 Communications, Equity and Diversity Council  
6 known as CEDC, leaders and members, our  
7 incredible speakers that are here and the  
8 esteemed guests listening in today. This is a  
9 great day.

10 My name is Clayton Banks and I'm the  
11 CEO of Silicon Harlem and a proud member of the  
12 CEDC. It is my honor to moderate today about  
13 the important lessons that we have learned from  
14 the pandemic.

15 The COVID-19 pandemic has brought  
16 unprecedented challenges and disruptions to our  
17 daily lives as well as our businesses and  
18 industries. However, it has also taught us  
19 valuable lessons about the importance of  
20 preparedness, resilience and adaptability.

21 As we move forward it is crucial  
22 that we take the lessons we have learned during

1 this crisis and apply them to build a stronger  
2 and more resilient society. Our distinguished  
3 panel of speakers today, they're going to share  
4 those lessons learned from the pandemic on the  
5 topic of broadband connectivity of  
6 availability, affordability and deployment.

7 The outcome of this discussion will  
8 provide recommendations to the FCC as Heather  
9 talked about to advance digital communication  
10 for all. Now, we have several speakers and  
11 we're excited about that and we want all of you  
12 to listen carefully to our conversation because  
13 this is a national challenge that we have and  
14 we are excited to make it happen.

15 And again, our distinguished panel  
16 of speakers today will not only share their  
17 lessons but they're going to actually provide  
18 some ideas of moving forward.

19 And although we are Panel One, there  
20 is also a Panel Two and following us they will  
21 be discussing adoption and digital readiness  
22 and it will be moderated by Sarah Kate Ellis,

1 so we're asking you to stay on for both of  
2 these panels as essential for your ears to hear  
3 this and to share with what we're doing.

4 And I also want to recognize Vickie  
5 Robinson who's also one of our leaders on  
6 Workstream 3 and we are very appreciative of  
7 her leadership in this as well. I will ask  
8 each panelist to provide a short introduction  
9 of yourself, starting with Ms. Nguyen, the  
10 Joshua Breitbart, Annette Taylor, Viorica  
11 Ovidiu and Greta Byrum and Broderick Johnson.

12 So, let's get this moving all right,  
13 let's jump right in. I will say, Ms. Nguyen,  
14 if you could do a very quick introduction that  
15 would be great.

16 MS. NGUYEN: Yes, Clayton, for the  
17 introduction and setting up the panel. My name  
18 is Thu Nguyen, the Executive Direction of OCA,  
19 Asian Pacific American Advocates. The second  
20 oldest national Asian American Native Hawaii  
21 Pacific Islander or AANAPI Civil Rights  
22 organization.

1                   Our membership-based organization  
2 has over 50 chapters and affiliates in 24  
3 states with headquarters in D.C. connecting a  
4 wide variety of community programs and policy  
5 and advocacy work to advance equity and  
6 opportunity for all AAANPIs.

7                   MR. BANKS: Thank you very much.  
8 Josh.

9                   MR. BREITBART: Thank you, Clayton,  
10 thank you to the Commission for forming the  
11 Council and to the Council for taking on this  
12 subject. It's certainly an emotional one to  
13 look back on but a critically important one.

14                   I'm Joshua Breitbart, I'm Senior  
15 Vice President for ConnectALL at Empire State  
16 Development and Director of the Division of  
17 Broadband Access for the State of New York.

18                   From 2015 to July of 2020, I was  
19 Senior Advisor for Broadband and then Deputy  
20 CTO for Broadband for the City of New York.  
21 So, that was during those crucial first months  
22 of the pandemic when New York City was the

1 global epicenter. So, thank you so much for  
2 the opportunity to join you today.

3 MR. BANKS: Excellent. Annette  
4 Taylor.

5 MS. TAYLOR: Good morning, everyone.  
6 Thank you, Clayton and thanks also to the  
7 Commission and to the Council. I appreciate  
8 this conversation and being a part of it.

9 I am proud to serve as the Director  
10 of the Office of Digital Equity and Literacy  
11 within our North Carolina Department of  
12 Information Technology. It's the first of its  
13 kind in the country thanks to our Governor, Roy  
14 Cooper, who made it a priority.

15 Obviously, we're focusing on  
16 affordable internet, digital literacy skills  
17 and the devices and of course, the planning  
18 process for our comprehensive digital equity  
19 plan. Great to be here and look forward to the  
20 discussion.

21 MR. BANKS: Thank you very much. I  
22 wouldn't be here without North Carolina, that's

1 where my mom's from, so we'll keep this going.

2 So, after Annette we have Viorica.

3 MR. VIORICA: Good morning, Clayton,  
4 esteemed colleagues and guests. Thank you the  
5 FFC staff and the Commission for the  
6 opportunity to be on this panel and share our  
7 experience.

8 My name is Ovidiu Viorica. I'm the  
9 Broadband and Technology Program Manager with  
10 the Public School Facilities Authority and  
11 recently New Mexico Office of Broadband and  
12 Access and Expansion.

13 I started my career over 25 years  
14 ago in the telecommunication industry. I  
15 worked for a state agency helping schools since  
16 early 2000 on facilities and since 2014 with  
17 broadband infrastructure and connectivity.

18 Our team just joined the New Mexico  
19 Office of Broadband Access and Expansion. An  
20 Office charged by Governor Michelle Lujan  
21 Grisham with the mission to connect everyone in  
22 that state including students and teachers,

1 tribal people, minorities, low income, people  
2 with disabilities, the list is very long.

3 New Mexico has the interesting  
4 distinction of being under a Judge's order  
5 since April 2021 to provide devices and  
6 internet connectivity for at risk students and  
7 that category includes native students, English  
8 language learners, students from low-income  
9 families and students with disabilities, so a  
10 lot of work ahead of us. Thank you again for  
11 being, for allowing me to be here.

12 MR. BANKS: Thank you. Greta.

13 MS. BYRUM: Hi, I'm Greta Byrum.  
14 Thank you so much for having me today. I'm  
15 really excited to be here for this really  
16 important opportunity to share experiences from  
17 the pandemic.

18 I'm currently a principal at HR&A  
19 Advisors in the Broadband practice there and I  
20 serve on the Regents Advisory Council on  
21 Libraries for the State of New York as well as  
22 my local public library board in Beacon, New

1 York, the Howland Public Library.

2 During the pandemic I was running an  
3 organization called Community Tech New York, an  
4 organization I co-founded and working closely  
5 with the Detroit Community Technology Project  
6 and with the Southern Connected Communities  
7 Project in rural Tennessee.

8 And that collective of organizations  
9 is focused on building collaborative community  
10 broadband and digital equity ecosystems  
11 including through broadband teaching tools,  
12 direct project support and community  
13 organizing. So, I'm really pleased to be here  
14 and excited to share my experiences, thank you.

15 MR. BANKS: Well, thank you, and we  
16 also Mr. Broderick Johnson.

17 MR. JOHNSON: Hi, good morning,  
18 everyone. I'm Broderick Johnson and I'm the  
19 Executive Vice President for Public Policy and  
20 also, I'm Executive President for Digital  
21 Equity at Comcast Corporation.

22 And in that capacity, I lead our

1 companies on parallel efforts to close the  
2 digital divide, to bring about true digital  
3 equity. Thank you, Clayton, for leading this  
4 discussion and for your leadership and Heather  
5 as well and also, folks at the FCC who have  
6 really made this an incredibly rewarding  
7 experience to be involved in and I look forward  
8 to discussion today. Thank you.

9 MR. BANKS: Thank you, Broderick.  
10 We have had a great team over the time that  
11 we've been working on this and so, I just want  
12 to acknowledge our entire Workstream 3 team for  
13 the EDC and the team has put together the  
14 questions that we will have, that we're going  
15 to be sharing today.

16 So, today it's a, it's several  
17 questions that we're going to go through. Not  
18 every question has to have everyone speak on  
19 but there will be several that will require  
20 that. Again, the theme is availability,  
21 affordability and deployment. So, let's jump  
22 right into our actual questions and I look

1 forward to any questions that may be coming  
2 from our population.

3 All right, so the very first  
4 question we wanted to put on table and this  
5 will be one for all of you if you feel like you  
6 want, you know, add your voice to it, is what  
7 if any programs did you or your members or  
8 folks you work with implement during the  
9 pandemic regarding broadband availability,  
10 affordability, adoption, accessibility and  
11 deployment?

12 That is our question. What if any  
13 program did you or your members implement  
14 during the pandemic regarding broadband  
15 availability, affordability, adoption,  
16 accessibility? So, if you don't mind, I will  
17 call off the names to get started and Annette  
18 Taylor, if you don't mind to start and we'll go  
19 from there.

20 MS. TAYLOR: Sure, I'll speak to the  
21 State of North Carolina, of course. As has  
22 been repeated, the pandemic has shined a light

1 on inequality. It's something we all know.

2 Our Governor had already made  
3 closing the digital divide a top priority many  
4 years prior to the pandemic. The Department of  
5 Information Technology made strides in closing  
6 it by implementing or deploying our GREAT  
7 grants, our State GREAT grants.

8 Those were already beginning in, as  
9 late as 2018 or as early as 2018 the broadband  
10 expansion grants and then our Governor  
11 requested funding for affordability in the  
12 state budget, although it did get cut.

13 So, we certainly focused heavily on  
14 the emergency broadband benefit and then of  
15 course, ACP, so pushing that and we really  
16 worked on pushing that through mailers. We  
17 partnered with state agencies like our North  
18 Carolina Department of Transportation.

19 And we believe pushing that really  
20 made a difference and it has helped us, helped  
21 inform our efforts towards our outreach efforts  
22 with ACP.

1                   MR. BANKS:     That's one, that's  
2 really good information. We actually have one  
3 of our members helping to take a lot of notes  
4 on this, Louis, and so, thank you Louis for  
5 that. Let me move on to Mr. Johnson, same  
6 question.

7                   MR. JOHNSON: Yes, thank you. Let  
8 me just share a few sort of general  
9 observations first and then I'll get very  
10 specific. First, the investment in our network  
11 made sure that throughout the pandemic the  
12 broadband network worked for everyone.

13                   It didn't fail. There were no  
14 shortages. Second, at Comcast, in terms of  
15 affordability and adoption, we've been at this  
16 for more than a decade through our internet  
17 essentials program, which allowed us to address  
18 those needs immediately even before the  
19 government stepped up to the plate, which we're  
20 all so grateful for with programs like EBB and  
21 the ACP.

22                   We launched our Lift Zones program

1 and opened up our public hotspots across the  
2 country through the pandemic and they continue  
3 today. From the start of 2020 through 2022 we  
4 built out an additional 2.7 million homes and  
5 businesses and we'll add another 1 million this  
6 year.

7 But look, addressing costs and  
8 deployment alone won't solve the digital  
9 divide, we all know that. We need digital  
10 navigators. We need to invest in digital  
11 navigators. Grass roots community-based  
12 solutions to close the digital divide.

13 Now specific to broadband  
14 availability, affordability, adoption,  
15 accessibility and deployment, first with regard  
16 to availability, we serve, at Comcast we serve  
17 entire communities at the same speed and the  
18 same services.

19 Availability in our markets was  
20 already ubiquitous. In terms of affordability,  
21 as I mentioned, we've been at this issue of  
22 affordability for over a decade. We started in

1       Essentials in 2011 and never changed that price  
2       from \$9.95 a month across more than a decade.

3               We also though increased speeds  
4       seven times and we've doubled speeds during the  
5       early days of the pandemic.     In terms of  
6       adoption, our Internet Essentials program has  
7       been more than just about helping people get  
8       online.

9               It's also about skills training  
10       them, low-cost computers, as we know those are  
11       important as well.   In terms of deployment, our  
12       crews got back in the field as soon as it was  
13       safe to do that to continue building out more  
14       communities.

15              And finally, with respect to access  
16       and I want to address access perhaps a little  
17       bit differently.   But we made sure that our  
18       products and services were more accessible to  
19       everyone.     So, for example, in 2019 we  
20       partnered with Communication Service for the  
21       Deaf to offer ASL videochat options for  
22       Internet Essentials and our Xfinity customers.

1                   And finally, I would say our  
2 Internet Essentials call center has access to  
3 translation services or 240 plus languages.  
4 So, in terms of access we approach it that way  
5 as well.

6                   MR. BANKS: So, let me ask a quick  
7 question and that was a great, a lot of things  
8 built there that I think others can learn from,  
9 so Comcast leading the way from that  
10 perspective.

11                   Was there anything that you had to  
12 adjust during COVID because you guys already  
13 had done a lot of that before COVID, which is  
14 interesting, so I'm curious, was there any sort  
15 of difference that or outcomes as a result of  
16 the pandemic that we can all share as well?

17                   MR. JOHNSON: Well, certainly and  
18 I'll use as an example our Internet Essentials  
19 Partnership Program, IEPP. Realizing that  
20 especially with respect to education and the  
21 needs of students that it was really important  
22 to get into the schools.

1           And to be able to provide access to  
2     the internet and to make awareness of our  
3     programs even more exemplary by going into the  
4     school systems and working with school systems  
5     in order to do that. Second, I'd say with  
6     regard to our Lift Zones and realizing that  
7     there are so many millions of households not  
8     connected to the internet.

9           Not so much because of accessibility  
10    to the connection but because of a lack of  
11    awareness about adoption. So, we've opened up  
12    more than 1,200 Lift Zones across the country.  
13    I think more than 1,250. These are community-  
14    based centers where Wi-Fi is accessible.

15           Again, these are, been very  
16    important for people who otherwise were  
17    enormously challenged to have broadband at  
18    home.

19           MR. BANKS: Well, thank you very  
20    much. Let me move on to, if you don't mind, Thu  
21    Nguyen, can you answer this or address this  
22    question as what if any programs did you or

1 your members implement during the pandemic  
2 regarding broadband availability,  
3 affordability, adoption, accessibility and  
4 deployment?

5 MS. NGUYEN: Absolutely. So, as a  
6 community-based organization we focus more on  
7 the adoption and accessibility side, well,  
8 accessibility as it impacts adoption, right.  
9 And so, during the pandemic we realized, we did  
10 a lot of in language work during the pandemic  
11 because not just with, you know, the COVID-19  
12 health items that are coming out of the  
13 government that weren't given in Asian  
14 languages.

15 When EBB came out and then when ACP  
16 came out there wasn't a lot of in language  
17 support from the FCC side, so we did work with  
18 the FCC. We worked with our tech partners like  
19 Comcast, Verizon, Charter, T-Mobile, AT&T, et  
20 cetera, to make sure that their in-language  
21 materials about how to get low-cost internet  
22 options as well as like discounts on devices

1 was really essential.

2 So, we developed like in Asian  
3 language guides for our community. In addition  
4 to that like many of the AAPI community are  
5 small business owners and with the pandemic,  
6 they didn't realize, you know, visual literacy  
7 is part of, you know, the digital divide.

8 Our community, while some may have  
9 access to devices and internet, they still have  
10 a huge gap in digital literacy. So, we  
11 developed a workshop module that we presented  
12 through our OCA Chapters for small business  
13 owners on like, you know, what are the mobile  
14 apps out there, what are the online business  
15 options for you to, you know, get your food on  
16 a delivery app, right, or get your services  
17 online so that people can order from you.  
18 Things like that.

19 So, and another thing too is that  
20 AANHPI students were part of this digital  
21 divide where many didn't have access to laptops  
22 and before EBB came out, we actually went

1 around looking to see where we could get money  
2 and partnered with the Walmart Foundation to  
3 get a few hundred laptops out to AANHPI  
4 students in Hawaii, California, Massachusetts,  
5 Washington State.

6 Because when they were sent home  
7 from school, not only did they not have  
8 reliable internet, they just didn't have a  
9 device. And so, those were some of the few  
10 things that we did during the pandemic.

11 MR. BANKS: That is awesome and, you  
12 know, we're taking notes on all of this stuff,  
13 so this is very good. We want to share this  
14 with the entire country of all of these things  
15 that the first three speakers already have, you  
16 know, we can like close this whole thing down  
17 right and go out to the world. But we're going  
18 to keep this going and I'll, if you don't mind,  
19 Ovidiu, if you could share the same question.

20 MR. VIORICA: Sure, thank you  
21 Clayton. So, New Mexico is a western state. It  
22 is rural, it is tribal. It has many federal

1 lands and more cows than people. We have  
2 wonderful vistas but we also have distances,  
3 large mass areas that could fit 13 New  
4 Hampshire's in it.

5 And that is a difficult landscape to  
6 navigate in terms of broadband. I want to  
7 begin by acknowledging that the Universal  
8 Service Fund UA programming particular after  
9 2014 Modernization order has been essential to  
10 providing broadband access to students and  
11 teachers while in school.

12 But we did not do enough as a  
13 country, as a state over the last decade to  
14 connect everyone else, especially students,  
15 teachers when they are at home. So, we were  
16 extremely unprepared for the crisis.

17 I heard from so many teachers that  
18 it was surreal to send, in March 2020, send  
19 everybody, all the students without knowing if  
20 they had a device, if they had internet access,  
21 if they had any support from a technical  
22 perspective.

1           So, I'll give you an example of an  
2 IT Director from a small school, Bob Simpson,  
3 in Reserve, New Mexico, population 289. He is  
4 the IT Director but he also is a coach, drives  
5 the school bus.

6           And he would be first to recognize  
7 that he is not a broadband expert. So, we  
8 asked a lot of these folks overnight to pivot  
9 to full online delivered instruction and  
10 possibly work. Deploy Wi-Fi hotspots, maybe  
11 they work, maybe they didn't.

12           Chromebooks, tablets, whatever they  
13 could put their hands on and it was heart  
14 wrenching to hear and see the teachers lined up  
15 at the school with their students, some of  
16 their students along the wall, right?

17           Because that was the only place in a  
18 ten, twenty-mile radius where connectivity  
19 could be found. So, it was an all hands on  
20 deck. State agencies, communities, non-  
21 profits, internet service providers taking  
22 advantage of the ECF, the ACP, all the other

1 programs that were the lifeline of, during that  
2 crisis and they continued to be because we have  
3 to do better.

4 If I have a message from this  
5 conversation for everyone out there it's that  
6 this time around, we better get the job done.  
7 Stay focused and utilize all the funding  
8 sources that Heather so nicely presented. This  
9 is a once in a lifetime opportunity to solve  
10 this problem once and for all because it's  
11 probably not going to come around again.

12 MR. BANKS: Well, this is just great  
13 information. One of the things that we very  
14 focused on at CEDC is to look at all of the  
15 country, whether it's rural or in major cities.

16 You know, we're trying to figure out  
17 and it may not be one thing that will work for  
18 everyone but if we can get all of the right  
19 results for all those type of areas it's going  
20 to be very important. Distance is definitely a  
21 challenge to your point and I appreciate what  
22 you've shared with us as we'll keep going.

1 Greta.

2 MS. BYRUM: Thanks, yes, it's been  
3 wonderful to hear everybody, the amazing work  
4 that everybody here has been doing. I'm going  
5 to speak to three examples that I was involved  
6 in. One urban, one rural and one surrounding  
7 libraries.

8 So, the first example I want to talk  
9 about is grass roots Wi-Fi in Detroit and the  
10 Bronx. So, my group, Community Tech New York  
11 along with the Detroit Community Technology  
12 Project came together under the umbrella of The  
13 Community Technology Collective.

14 And in the Bronx, we collectively  
15 built out 15 community hubs, Wi-Fi hubs. Those  
16 were using low-cost equipment. We trained  
17 local people as digital stewards to install and  
18 maintain that equipment.

19 We set up solar charging stations  
20 and access points in church parking lots as  
21 well as, you know, in places where people were  
22 seeking other social services. We developed

1 intranets so that there was some material that  
2 people could access, they didn't have to get  
3 all the way onto the big internet.

4 There were neighborhood servers  
5 where people could access homework or  
6 announcements about emergency closures and  
7 such. To the extent that we were charging  
8 anybody for service, we stopped charging during  
9 the pandemic and that was all an effort that  
10 was lead in collaboration with faith-based  
11 organizations.

12 In Detroit it was one church,  
13 Boulevard Harambee, a local community  
14 organization and local radio station, NEWCC and  
15 Grace in Action, which is a youth worker  
16 collective. In the Bronx we working with The  
17 Bronx Community Development Corporation and  
18 also worked with Silicon Harlem in these  
19 efforts.

20 And so, you know, these were kind of  
21 gap solutions but meant a lot to folks on the  
22 ground and I think there's a lot to learn about

1 gap solutions and how they're developed  
2 collaboratively with the types of organizations  
3 which are not normally thought of as technology  
4 organizations, right, these are churches, these  
5 are community orgs.

6 So, that's the kind of urban case  
7 that I wanted to bring. In rural Tennessee, in  
8 Appalachia the Southern Connected Communities  
9 Project, this is an unserved area, so a lot of  
10 folks are just getting access through satellite  
11 connections, which is very, you know, there's a  
12 lot, it's low speeds and it goes out when it  
13 rains and things like that.

14 So, folks -- or when there's heavy  
15 winds. So, what we did there in collaboration  
16 with the Clearfork Community Institute was we  
17 were able to use a modem to pull a cell signal  
18 to the community center and then from there  
19 build out again, with low-cost Wi-Fi equipment,  
20 build out community access.

21 And that was really critical when  
22 the local clinic had to close and so, all folks

1 had access to was actually this Wi-Fi network  
2 for healthcare. So, those were a couple of  
3 impactful examples.

4 And then I just wanted to shout out  
5 libraries who kind of effortlessly rolled out  
6 many programs. Queens Public Library, for  
7 example, you know, they have over 25 Wi-Fi hubs  
8 across their service area. They served over  
9 500,000 unique users in the year of 2020.

10 Distributed thousands of laptops and  
11 hotspot devices and also provided help desk  
12 support, one-on-one support and virtual  
13 programming, extensive virtual programming.  
14 Ten thousand virtual programs in a dozen  
15 languages, you know, book clubs, author talks,  
16 Zumba classes, story times.

17 All of those things and a 24-hour  
18 Black Health and Healing virtual summit to  
19 focus on issues including mental health, health  
20 equity, parenting, civil rights, racism and the  
21 disproportionate effects of the virus.

22 So, just shouting out like amazing

1 community efforts with, you know, really  
2 encouraging all of us to hold in our minds  
3 that, you know, it's not just technology  
4 organizations who show up to advance digital  
5 equity.

6 It's all of these incredibly  
7 important players who show up in a crisis and  
8 who have those trusted relationships with  
9 communities that enable them to serve in that  
10 capacity.

11 MR. VIORICA: We cannot hear you.

12 MR. JOHNSON: Clayton, you're on  
13 mute. Just realized, you're on mute brother.

14 MR. BANKS: I'm muted this whole  
15 time. All right, first of all, I want to say it  
16 sounds like you went all over the country. I  
17 mean, there's so many different things that you  
18 shared with us were so important.

19 So, thank you for that and we're certainly  
20 going to probably come back on some of these  
21 things. But I want to get Joshua's voice too,  
22 of course, you know, New York was hit very hard

1 during COVID and he wasn't in that position  
2 that he's in now. He was in the position for  
3 the City of New York. So, Josh, can you talk a  
4 little bit about the question that we have on  
5 the board here?

6 MR. BREITBART: Yes, and I just want  
7 to start by praising the colleagues in the City  
8 of New York. More than 300,000 public  
9 servants. I'm incredibly proud to have been  
10 among that group in that time.

11 I particularly want to highlight the  
12 work of the Department of Information  
13 Technology and Telecommunications that, you  
14 know, worked incredibly to maintain continuity  
15 of operations through that whole effort  
16 including working with the Department of  
17 Education to transition the largest school  
18 district in the country.

19 Over a million students including my  
20 two children to remote learning in the course  
21 of a week. An incredible effort. I want to  
22 highlight just one particular program that we

1 ran out of the Mayor's Office of the Chief  
2 Technology Officer in partnership with New York  
3 City Housing Authority, our Public Housing  
4 Authority and Department for the Aging called  
5 NYCHA Connected Older Adults.

6 We worked, we had vendor  
7 partnerships with T-Mobile and Older Adults  
8 Technology Services, who's represented on the  
9 second panel. You may hear more about this  
10 project from them. In the span of about five  
11 to six weeks we'd identified a particular  
12 vulnerable population at the time, which were  
13 isolated seniors living in public housing  
14 during the lockdown.

15 Many of whom did not have internet  
16 connectivity. So, we, through that partnership  
17 distributed internet connected tablets,  
18 personalized tech support, each one -- and  
19 remote training to more than 10,000 of those  
20 seniors in public housing.

21 Everyone really who was in that  
22 position who requested a tablet. So, they

1 would receive a phone call automated from the  
2 Public Housing Authority. They could select  
3 that they wanted to opt into this program.

4 Generally, within three days UPS and  
5 really praise to the UPS workers that, you  
6 know, kept things going at the time and made  
7 this possible, would deliver the tablet to  
8 their door and they could get it, no touch.

9 Within two or three days after that,  
10 if they hadn't already called in set up the  
11 tablet themselves, they would receive a phone  
12 call from Older Adults Technology Services and  
13 be guided into a remote training platform that  
14 OATS, that organization had set up to connect  
15 them to training resources.

16 Including some of the library  
17 resources that Greta described or, you know,  
18 whatever activity was critical to them.  
19 Staying in touch with their family, accessing  
20 government services including food and  
21 healthcare or staying in touch with critical  
22 organizations including church services or

1 anything that they needed to stay connected  
2 through that time.

3 And it really had an incredible  
4 impact to, as you'll hear I think from Tom  
5 Kamber, not just, you know, as just a means of  
6 survival, maintaining connectivity in an  
7 incredibly challenging time.

8 So, that's just one project but  
9 really, I think this discussion is a yes and  
10 because there's so many different efforts going  
11 on, you know, across the city and across the  
12 country.

13 MR. BANKS: Let me unmute myself.  
14 You had me just gripped, so that's really good.  
15 I'm actually going to move it along. The one  
16 question I just asked and all these answers, we  
17 could just shut the panel down at this point.  
18 I mean, you guys have already just really given  
19 some great information for the country here.

20 However, I do want to ask, I'm going  
21 to jump off, I'm going to jump to different  
22 type of question but very much related, which

1 is looking back, right, so looking back to  
2 inform how we might look forward, right.

3 So, let's go to that question.  
4 Looking back to inform how we might look  
5 forward. What opportunities exist to address  
6 these challenges at scale?

7 For example, to the extent that you  
8 believe that things like the EBB Emergency  
9 Broadband Benefit and successor, ACP, the  
10 Affordable Connectivity Program benefit are  
11 successful, should these subsidies continue and  
12 what if anything should be modified as part of  
13 extending these programs?

14 So, I will ask Josh, since you were  
15 already talking, I'd love for you to go ahead  
16 and try to address this question. I'll give  
17 everyone who wants a chance to talk to this.  
18 You don't have to if you don't want but happy  
19 to hear anyone who wants to talk to this  
20 particular question.

21 MR. BREITBART: Well, certainly the  
22 answer is yes, and I also would praise the ISPs

1 that are committed to not putting anybody off  
2 from service in the immediate response and then  
3 those benefits were and have been and continue  
4 to be critically important in expanding access.

5 I think another thing that we also  
6 saw was it's vitally important to have also a  
7 range of community driven, mission driven  
8 community-based ISPs were critically important  
9 also in the early response.

10 So, many stepped up to offer help in  
11 expanding connectivity. We used a, had a  
12 partnership with the Housing Authority and the  
13 Economic Development Corporation of the, of New  
14 York City. A rapid response solicitation that  
15 allowed us to organize all those offers of help  
16 to deliver services at the time.

17 And continue those efforts to spread  
18 and partner with a variety of ISPs of all sizes  
19 to deliver permanently affordable efforts. So,  
20 I think again, it's a yes and effort. Those  
21 are critically important. Also, important to  
22 have key partners that are mission driven and

1 to think about how to achieve permanently  
2 affordable services to continue to expand  
3 choice for all residents.

4 MR. BANKS: Thank you for that,  
5 Josh. Ovidiu, in New Mexico and the work you're  
6 doing out there, any response to that question?

7 MR. VIORICA: Absolutely and if  
8 there is a big silver lining from the crisis is  
9 that we learned and relearned how to come  
10 together to solve problems in an effective way  
11 rapidly, right, immediately, right.

12 Everybody pulled together and it's  
13 so heartwarming to hear all these stories. But  
14 it will take more than that. It will take  
15 particularly not only the one-time cost but  
16 also for the sustainability piece, some measure  
17 of subsidies will be needed for high-cost  
18 areas.

19 Those are rural areas, tribal areas.  
20 Even, you know, urban low-income areas. That  
21 subsidy has to be there. Otherwise, this is  
22 not going to happen and the same populations

1 will be left on the wrong side of the digital  
2 divide if we do not have these resources in  
3 place.

4 So, we have to work with these  
5 trusted institutions, anchor institutions,  
6 churches, schools, libraries, non-profits.  
7 ISPs have a huge and important role to play but  
8 they have to run businesses. They have to stay  
9 profitable.

10 So, we have to recognize that and we  
11 have to recognize that if rural America is  
12 important to our country, if tribal areas are  
13 important to our country, then we have to  
14 invest in that for the long term.

15 Because the connectivity is the  
16 future. They have, this is only way that they  
17 will be able to thrive. So, absolutely the  
18 programs should continue particularly for  
19 western states.

20 MR. BANKS: Excellent. Thu?

21 MS. NGUYEN: Sorry, just looking for  
22 my unmute button, of course. But I think

1 talking to the first part of the question about  
2 what opportunities exist to address the  
3 challenges at scale.

4 For us, I mean, we do a lot civic  
5 engagement work as well. Getting out the vote,  
6 getting out the count for the 2020 census and,  
7 you know, and I think ACP outreach and  
8 adoption, getting all of our community members  
9 aware of what resources are out there is really  
10 important.

11 And so, for us civic engagement and  
12 ACP outreach should go hand and hand, they do  
13 go hand and hand at OCA because what happens is  
14 that while we're asking, you know, many of the  
15 AANHPI community are limited English proficient  
16 or they are new immigrants.

17 And so, they don't know what are all  
18 the resources available to them for them to get  
19 a low cost or a discount on a device, right, or  
20 a low-cost internet plan or even, you know, you  
21 can use your subsidy on your current plan if  
22 it's higher in cost.

1           And so, doing ACP outreach along  
2 with knocking on someone's door and asking if  
3 they vote yet is really, a really easy way to  
4 further conduct like ACP and low-cost internet  
5 outreach. And I think, you know, ACP needs to  
6 be continued, you know, we ask that the federal  
7 government continue the program, of course.

8           Because beyond getting folks online,  
9 this program also helps people get devices and  
10 we're doing a digital in AAPI digital access  
11 survey right now with over 7,000 responses  
12 across the country because there's a few  
13 research data flowing around out there that  
14 says like, oh, 98 percent of Asian Americans  
15 have access to the internet.

16           But that is part of this model  
17 minority myth because the data is not this  
18 aggregated. Many of our community, Southeast  
19 Asian, Pacific Islander communities are low  
20 income, are limited English proficient.

21           And so, we need to ask the questions  
22 of what kind of internet do they have access to

1 and then how are they utilizing the internet.  
2 Are they really utilizing it to its fullest  
3 potential and that goes back to Broderick's --  
4 you made a comment about digital navigators,  
5 that's also something that we need in our  
6 community, right.

7 And so, right now we're seeing in  
8 about our 5,000 English survey responses, 14  
9 percent of the respondents are saying that they  
10 only have a cellular access to internet at  
11 home, which you know that's not an effective  
12 way to do school work, to apply to jobs, get  
13 government benefits and so, this program is  
14 really important and needs to be continued.

15 MR. BANKS: If I could ask a  
16 question before Greta gets on here. Did you  
17 use the term API? That there's and what were  
18 you talking about other than --

19 MS. NGUYEN: Yes, Asian American  
20 Pacific Islander, yes, AAPI.

21 MR. BANKS: Oh, okay, you know,  
22 that's a tech phrase too. So, I was --

1 MS. NGUYEN: Right, right.

2 MR. BANKS: You had me there. All  
3 right, thank you for that. Greta.

4 MS. BYRUM: Yes, thanks so much. I  
5 just wanted to point to a report that was  
6 released by the Benton Foundation on Friday  
7 where they found in a survey that over half or  
8 half of ACP eligible households are still  
9 unaware of the program.

10 And they also tied that to digital  
11 skills and so, I think, you know, the more  
12 likely that folks have digital skills, the more  
13 likely they are aware of ACP and want to sign  
14 up and their primary recommendation is to  
15 collaborate with trusted local institutions and  
16 communities, which is really a theme.

17 So, I want to just number one, say  
18 that we should not be addressing digital equity  
19 needs sort of one by one but rather looking  
20 holistically at both boosting digital skills,  
21 understanding the outreach that works for  
22 different communities and, you know, getting

1 ACP awareness out there.

2 And then the second thing I want to  
3 say is we are asking these local anchor  
4 institutions to play a role and really to  
5 leverage their trusted relationships with the  
6 communities and that's really important to  
7 remember in terms of the sustainability of the  
8 program.

9 Because we don't want to leave those  
10 institutions on the hook if the program  
11 changes. It's very important to set them up in  
12 a way that protects their trustworthiness  
13 within the community.

14 MR. BANKS: Excellent. Does anyone  
15 else want to comment on this?

16 MS. TAYLOR: I'd like to speak to  
17 that. Yes, Clayton, I'd like to speak to that.

18 MR. BANKS: Okay, so I see heads  
19 nodding, so I'll go with Broderick and then  
20 Annette you --

21 MS. TAYLOR: Can you hear me?

22 MR. BANKS: -- bring us home to it.

1 MS. TAYLOR: Okay.

2 MR. JOHNSON: Yes, I was going to  
3 say what or echo what's been sung by choir  
4 here. I think that as, you know, for example,  
5 as Ovidiu said at the outset and we all say  
6 this constantly, this is a once in a lifetime  
7 opportunity.

8 There are unprecedented billions of  
9 dollars that have been invested in both  
10 deployment projects but also, of course, around  
11 adoption through ACP and before that, EBB.

12 But we still, we know that only  
13 about a third of eligible households for ACP  
14 have signed up. That's about 17 million  
15 people. That's great but there are tens of  
16 millions of others to get to. ACP adoption  
17 rates in the states vary.

18 In my home State of Maryland, I know  
19 the new Governor is committed certainly to this  
20 but in Maryland only 27 percent of eligible  
21 households have signed up to ACP. There's a  
22 lot of work to do there.

1 Louisiana on the other hand, 47  
2 percent. So, collaboration, Governors working  
3 together, all of us working together to  
4 increase those rates. We need policy makers  
5 then to again, to be really focused on  
6 awareness to drive adoption.

7 Then we need to of course, continue  
8 to scale what works and, Greta, I love coming  
9 to Detroit. I'm a University of Michigan crazy  
10 alum. I don't know if you are but I am. But I  
11 love going to Detroit and one of my most  
12 favorite moments over the past year was  
13 visiting a place called St. Patrick's Senior  
14 Center in Detroit.

15 A fabulous digital navigator's  
16 program, which we support and there we were  
17 seeing how seniors were navigating the internet  
18 to set up their emails accounts and to order  
19 groceries online and to make video calls, of  
20 course to their family and friends to have  
21 birthday celebrations, for example, throughout  
22 the pandemic.

1           We need to look for opportunities to  
2           scale all of that work because we know those  
3           things make a big difference. I was also in  
4           Houston this past year and we shouldn't always  
5           assume that, of course, we know what it is that  
6           people need when they go on the internet.

7           In Houston I met a gentleman, 90-  
8           year-old gentleman, who was so happy in this  
9           digital navigator class because he was able to  
10          stream Gunsmoke every day and for him that was,  
11          for those of you who are perhaps too young to  
12          know what Gunsmoke was, it's a very famous  
13          television show.

14          And watching the reruns made this  
15          gentleman very happy. So, education, yes.  
16          Economic mobility, yes. Telehealth, yes. But  
17          also, even I'd say more basic things to keep  
18          people very happy and satisfied about their  
19          lives are important.

20          MR. BANKS: Very good, thank you,  
21          Broderick. So, we're going to back to a little  
22          bit more of that but certainly right now, let's

1 hear from Annette Taylor.

2 MS. TAYLOR: Sure, I'll wrap up the  
3 conversation on that. I could not agree more  
4 with my panelist here that yes, ACP is  
5 important to continue. The recurring theme has  
6 also been about partnerships.

7 I think that partnerships is what  
8 has led North Carolina to be in at over 700,000  
9 of the 1.3 million that we are aware of. You  
10 know, it's all about the data and where that  
11 comes from and what's being defined by that but  
12 understanding that there are 1.3 million right  
13 now that are eligible and we have over 700,000.

14 The partnership I described earlier,  
15 working with Department of Transportation, our  
16 DMV, getting the word out through the channels  
17 that they already use. Working with our school  
18 systems, the Department of Public Instruction  
19 and getting the word out through our free and  
20 reduced lunch program and just putting it out  
21 there from the initial outset.

22 Also, our Governor has asked the

1 service providers to offer a discounted program  
2 so that those who already qualify for ACP at  
3 the \$30 rate, they would be able to get it for  
4 free. And I think that some of the policies  
5 should occur is I agree with you on the digital  
6 navigation program.

7 We need a standardized program but  
8 we're excited in North Carolina that we  
9 creating our own statewide digital navigator  
10 program. We are also going to working with a  
11 hotline service so that people can get the type  
12 of support they need.

13 And that support, I mean, it can  
14 range from how to even get recertified. Once  
15 they initially qualify, did they move forward  
16 to the next step. What type of challenges did  
17 they have and having those digital navigators  
18 go back and say, did you actually go through  
19 with it?

20 Because we all know what some of the  
21 challenges are when it comes to that step two,  
22 so, you know, I just wanted to shout those

1 things out and I agree with everybody that  
2 collaboration and partnership with state  
3 agencies, community-based organizations and our  
4 libraries and so, here in North Carolina we're  
5 still leveraging our ARPA funds to invest in  
6 digital navigator programs across the state.

7 MR. BANKS: That was very, very good  
8 information here and appreciate what you have  
9 shared, Annette and everyone else. Like I  
10 said, I mean, this is, to me this is a  
11 nationwide conversation and we're hearing it  
12 from so many different perspectives.

13 But there's some real commonality  
14 here, so I'm so excited to keep this moving.  
15 Here's the next question. So, as I'm thinking  
16 through what I'm hearing there's a few things  
17 that I want, that I hope that we'll be able to  
18 address.

19 So, one of them is and we'll do that  
20 now, excuse me, how are you prepared for future  
21 pandemic type events? I mean, how are you  
22 prepared right now? Anything done differently

1 in light of this COVID-19 experience? How are  
2 you prepared for the next disaster? Josh, help  
3 us understand with that.

4 MR. BREITBART: Well, first I also  
5 just want to thank the FCC for the outreach  
6 grants for the Affordable Connectivity Program.  
7 We've reached almost 1.2 million people in New  
8 York with the program but the next million or  
9 two million are harder to reach.

10 And so, investing those efforts are  
11 critically important. I think we are keeping  
12 these lessons in mind as we implement the  
13 ConnectALL program in New York. Investing \$1  
14 billion in broadband infrastructure and digital  
15 equity across the state.

16 One key consideration is investing  
17 in government capacity. So, when we look back  
18 a few years I think it's hard to remember that  
19 New York City was one of the few local  
20 governments that had an office dedicated to  
21 connecting residents to the internet.

22 Now it's something that many have,

1 maintaining efforts from the pandemic and every  
2 state and territory has a state broadband  
3 office to implement federal broadband programs.  
4 That needs to be an enduring capability and we  
5 have a program to invest in government  
6 capacity, municipal infrastructure and  
7 assistance program.

8 I think we see that there's a range  
9 of ways to be more active for government. Some  
10 want to own infrastructure or be an ISP. Some  
11 just want to be a more active dedicated partner  
12 with community-based organizations or ISPs to  
13 make sure that everybody has service and  
14 support that they need.

15 But it's a consistent refrain, we  
16 need to make sure that we maintain that  
17 capability after this one-time funding sunsets.  
18 Another aspect is really thinking about the  
19 entire ecosystem and making sure that we've got  
20 the kind of partnerships that came together and  
21 emergency response.

22 We should continue to invest and

1 strengthen those. So, as we implement our  
2 digital equity plan and grant program, we are  
3 working with digital equity coalitions that  
4 include digital literacy and equipment  
5 providers, community anchor institutions,  
6 community-based organizations and frontline  
7 service organizations.

8 And ISPs including mission driven,  
9 locally based ISPs along with government to  
10 shape that plan but also, those relationships  
11 really need to endure. And then I think,  
12 third, to consider the recovery that makes us  
13 more resilient is to think about the widespread  
14 economic opportunities that come with the  
15 investment that we're making.

16 Something we tried to do from the  
17 city level and it is something that we're very  
18 much thinking about as we make those  
19 investments across the country, using recovery  
20 funds to increase economic opportunity, choice,  
21 permanent affordability particularly in the  
22 pandemic impacted communities.

1                   We're doing that including through  
2                   partnerships with housing providers in our  
3                   Affordable Housing Connectivity Program. So, I  
4                   want to really, again, praise our federal  
5                   partners, Congress, Treasury, Commerce, the  
6                   FCC.

7                   It's an excellent set of tools and  
8                   really now, I think states have a critical role  
9                   in applying those tools in a way that give us a  
10                  strong recovery that is inclusive and makes us  
11                  more resilient to anything that can come in the  
12                  future.

13                  MR.    BANKS:        Let me, well I  
14                  appreciate what you said as very good  
15                  information for all of us and I would assume  
16                  that everyone sort of agrees with what they're  
17                  saying. I want to move over to Annette Taylor,  
18                  do you want to address this particular question  
19                  that we're talking about.

20                  Are you prepared for future pandemic  
21                  type events?     Anything done differently in  
22                  light of the COVID-19 experience?     That's

1 something I'd love to hear from you and if  
2 anyone else on the panel wants to talk to this,  
3 put your hand up and I'll know.

4 MS. TAYLOR: Sure, thanks Clayton.  
5 I, like Joshua, want to thank and praise our  
6 federal and state policy makers on being in  
7 agreement and putting the resources and  
8 investments in place to move us and allow us to  
9 even have had these lessons learned.

10 I want to speak to one particular  
11 entity that I'm proud that our state has and  
12 that is our North Carolina Business Committee  
13 for Education. They already focused on work-  
14 based learning and connecting students to  
15 technology opportunities and connecting  
16 employers to students with skills.

17 But when this pandemic happened,  
18 they jumped into place and leveraged their  
19 partnerships with the corporate sector. It's  
20 the corporate sector that jumped in along with  
21 private, you know, private and public  
22 philanthropy, non-profit organizations to get

1 those devices to the students in the school and  
2 create a remote learning work group.

3 So, not only were the resources put  
4 in place with the schools all across the state  
5 but also, the learnings from them and what we  
6 know about those devices is how those students  
7 was able to use it and how they weren't, what  
8 the capacity, what challenges they had.

9 And so, we have reports that talk  
10 about, you know, what happened as a result of  
11 that. What type of future resources need to  
12 put in place and so, I would say to that, you  
13 know, just understanding more about the  
14 appropriate type of devices that families and  
15 households need for what their needs are.

16 It's not just a matter of giving  
17 someone a smartphone, which we know does not  
18 have all the capabilities but all households  
19 need laptops and computers because there are  
20 certain things you just can't do within -- I  
21 don't know if it was Broderick or Thu said this  
22 earlier that we understand that there are

1 seniors in the households.

2 The seniors in the household, they  
3 were isolated. We know we have to attend to  
4 them now. One of the biggest social things that  
5 our seniors do every week, all of us do it but  
6 is go to church and that is where our senior  
7 population, our aging population, that is where  
8 they were most affected.

9 And then, whether they could not get  
10 online and experience the church, we know they  
11 already could not be together with their  
12 friends and their family members but we also  
13 had the churches who they could not actually  
14 have that remote access.

15 If they didn't already do it then it  
16 was an even bigger challenge. Those are some  
17 of the areas that we're going to be focusing  
18 on. Not just in learning and documenting in  
19 our digital equity plan but also leveraging  
20 existing funds that we have to support  
21 community-based organizations that are going to  
22 working with these populations that we know are

1 all part Digital Equity Act.

2 MR. BANKS: You know, I like the, by  
3 the way everyone has their hand up, so I got  
4 that, all right. So, we're going to get to  
5 that. But I like this digital equity plan. Is  
6 that something that you're going to share  
7 around the country? Is that something that you  
8 guys would be willing to make sure that that,  
9 you know, becomes something that we all can  
10 benefit from?

11 MS. TAYLOR: As we know, all the  
12 states are working on their comprehensive  
13 digital equity plan five year and North  
14 Carolina had received the \$1.4 million for  
15 digital equity part and then our broadband  
16 infrastructure office received \$5 million, so  
17 totally we're working with \$6.4 million to put  
18 together a plan.

19 Now that plan has to be shared  
20 publicly and get public comments before it is  
21 submitted to NTIA to see what future  
22 investments in the state. So, we're really

1 excited about the process that we are executing  
2 to make that plan a reality.

3 MR. BANKS: Thank you very much.  
4 Let me go to, excuse me, if you don't mind, if  
5 you go to Broderick, you had your hand up and  
6 then we'll get to everybody else.

7 MR. JOHNSON: First let me observe,  
8 we could have this panel for another two or  
9 three hours, so I don't know --

10 MR. BANKS: I know that's right.

11 MR. JOHNSON: -- how busy everybody  
12 else is and I'm learning so much from other  
13 people as well. We're not just, you know, sort  
14 of preaching to the choir here, that's for  
15 sure. Because we're sharing a lot of important  
16 things about what we're been able to do.

17 You know, I think, first what we've  
18 learned and as we go forward, we should keep in  
19 mind is that again, in this country our  
20 broadband networks worked throughout the  
21 pandemic. The challenge was though for so many  
22 people was that they didn't know how they could

1 get online or they didn't have the devices or  
2 they didn't know how to use the devices.

3 And as we look forward, you know,  
4 look we'll continue with, at Comcast to invest  
5 in the network. We've made \$20 billion plus in  
6 investments over, in our network over the last  
7 five years.

8 We continue though to be very  
9 committed specifically of course, to digital  
10 equity and achieving that. So, we've put  
11 another a billion dollars looking forward into  
12 types of programs that we know achieve digital  
13 equity.

14 We will continue to offer Internet  
15 Essentials and Internet Essentials Plus, which  
16 for millions of folks is, you know, can be free  
17 now as a result of the ACP. The programs we've  
18 done in partnerships with schools will  
19 continue.

20 We need to continue to invest in  
21 what works and we have pretty good ideas of  
22 what works. We'll continue to invest in

1 digital navigators. And that's what I again,  
2 want to stress is really important is the  
3 awareness.

4 We all know that trust is a huge  
5 factor. It mattered during the pandemic in  
6 terms of people getting vaccinated. It's  
7 mattered throughout efforts to get people to  
8 register to vote and to actually vote.

9 We know that critical though to all  
10 of that are trusted voices. And so, we're well  
11 situated for the next pandemic in terms of  
12 broadband and access but we need to make sure  
13 of course that millions of our friends and  
14 neighbors, people in communities are signed up.

15 MR. BANKS: Thank you, Broderick.  
16 Really this is building and building and  
17 building. Everyone is building on top of each  
18 other, I love this. This is going to make a  
19 big difference. So, let me go to Thu and then  
20 we'll have a Ovidiu after that.

21 MS. NGUYEN: Thanks, Clayton.  
22 Actually, Broderick basically summarized what I

1 was also going to say is that for OCA, I think  
2 we're prepared for the next pandemic thanks to,  
3 during this pandemic, having built those  
4 partnerships between government, private sector  
5 and then acting as trusted voices in the Asian  
6 American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander  
7 community, AANHPI.

8           You know, I think for us too, a key  
9 point is the intergenerational relationships.  
10 OCA focuses a lot on developing youth leaders  
11 and I think a part of that too, I mean, our  
12 youth, even if you're youth, right, if you are,  
13 if you have any elders in your home you are the  
14 digital navigator at home, right.

15           And so, part of the ACP outreach,  
16 the digital literacy work, it has to be done  
17 also intergenerationally and so, for us it's  
18 not just focusing on getting folks signed up  
19 but also bridging like intergenerational  
20 understanding on how to like help your friends  
21 and family get online and then navigate and use  
22 devices.

1                   And so, it's just all of these  
2 relationship building pieces that we've really  
3 strengthened and worked upon during the  
4 pandemic. We're prepared for anything to come.

5                   MR. BANKS:       Excellent, excellent.  
6 No, we're happy that there's so many  
7 coordinations here. So, Ovidiu.

8                   MR. VIORICA:       Thank you, and  
9 panelists, what a wonderful discussion. I love  
10 to hear about this intergenerational effort  
11 because we have something similar in New  
12 Mexico, Teeniors, where teens are helping  
13 seniors navigate the digital revolution that  
14 we're going through right now.

15                   But different parts of the country  
16 face different challenges as well and I would  
17 say from the New Mexico perspective, from  
18 western states perspective, we learned a lot,  
19 we accomplished a lot during the COVID crisis  
20 but I'm not sure we are prepared. Not yet.

21                   Because we don't want to go back the  
22 next crisis and park the school busses equipped

1 with Wi-Fi and mobile cells in low-income  
2 neighborhoods or have the kids sit on top of  
3 the hill for eight hours because that's where  
4 their where MiFi is working, you know, miles  
5 away from their house or whatever.

6 So, the Treasury and the BEAD  
7 investments will help tremendously. Probably  
8 not enough money to get all the job done but  
9 it's a significant downpayment. A significant  
10 leap forward. But we need to better use the  
11 existing infrastructure and build new  
12 infrastructure that is resilient.

13 New Mexico just went through the  
14 largest wildfire in its history, 500 square  
15 miles burned and the local communities already  
16 distressed are further distressed. And  
17 definitely the infrastructure is, has to  
18 rebuilt. So, and that is going to take time.

19 So, we have to establish predictable  
20 programs to build the infrastructure that is  
21 needed. That takes, you know, three, five  
22 years. It takes a long time. But then build

1 in the sustainability to make sure that those  
2 connections, those networks will still be there  
3 in 10, 20 years and so on.

4 And we have to build the structures  
5 in working relationships to make sure that all  
6 this work happens in an orderly and in a  
7 diligent fashion. And it will take all of us.  
8 It will take the federal government. It will  
9 take the state government.

10 It will take the local leaders. It  
11 will take the trusted partners at the local  
12 level. It will take all of us to make this  
13 happen and we have to stay focused because  
14 otherwise, we are going to go back to the 2010  
15 experience where we said we're going to solve  
16 this problem and low and behold, we didn't.

17 MR. BANKS: Well, thank you, Ovidiu.  
18 It's amazing that all of you, I guess, have  
19 been pent up. This is a lot coming out of this  
20 already. We're so excited about it.

21 I know, Greta, you want to have  
22 something to say, so we'll turn it over to you

1 and, Josh, you'll have something to say as  
2 well. So, Greta, why don't you go first.

3 MS. BYRUM: Yes, so I just wanted to  
4 mention all of those innovative gap solutions  
5 that I talked about at the top in Detroit and  
6 the Bronx. These were actually responses to  
7 previous crises and emergencies.

8 So, looking back, Superstorm Sandy  
9 in New York and the, you know, massive  
10 recession in Detroit both led to the need to  
11 create innovative grassroot solutions.  
12 However, when the crisis is over, for the  
13 moment, those innovative solutions don't get  
14 funded.

15 Like, these are things that get  
16 emergency funding but not interim funding and  
17 so, just want to remember that we want these  
18 kinds of things to progress beyond being gap  
19 solutions. We have to remember churches, food  
20 banks, direct service organizations, schools  
21 and libraries when there's not a crisis and we  
22 have to continue to see those institutions as

1 critical to advancing digital equity.

2 And I'm saying that right now  
3 because library budgets are being slashed right  
4 now and when we look at the impact that  
5 libraries had in the pandemic, we really need  
6 to, you know, bring forward their incredibly  
7 nimble capacity to bring connectivity, bring  
8 devices, do outreach for ACPs, training,  
9 programming, all of that.

10 And it's not just libraries but I'm  
11 speaking about libraries in particular because  
12 of budget concerns. Clayton, you're on mute.

13 MR. BANKS: I'm so speechless that  
14 my mute just automatically happens. But, no,  
15 let me tell you something, that is some deep  
16 stuff you're talking about, Greta.

17 You know, that, you know, that  
18 preparation is going to include a lot of  
19 different aspects. So, that was something that  
20 I really needed to hear myself. Josh, did you  
21 want to make any other comment about this?

22 MR. BREITBART: Well, yes, and I

1 think many have touched on this but it's  
2 exactly right is that the, we don't know the  
3 specifics or the shape of the next disaster  
4 that might come but what we do know for sure  
5 now is that connectivity will be a critical  
6 component of surviving it, responding to it and  
7 recovering from it.

8 And so, that is something we have to  
9 keep in mind in preparing not just for a future  
10 pandemic that I hope never comes but other  
11 things, you know, like wildfires and national  
12 disasters or others. And, I think, you know,  
13 two of you spoke to this, strengthening those  
14 personal relationships at the community level  
15 is so critical.

16 I was just in Buffalo at one of  
17 digital equity listening sessions and a  
18 community organization was talking about how  
19 when the pandemic hit people that they were  
20 regularly in touch with, just because they  
21 showed up the same meeting every week, the same  
22 location, once that stopped, they basically

1 lost contact with them.

2 Now through ACP outreach, through  
3 other types of engagement efforts, we can  
4 repair those fractured relationships. And  
5 again, you know, really just wanted to praise  
6 the New York State Legislature, Governor  
7 Hochul, all our federal partners for delivering  
8 the resources to get this done.

9 But ultimately, we really have to  
10 work with our local partners who are going to  
11 achieve and maintain those relationships to  
12 connect people, to keep them connected both  
13 digitally and socially.

14 MR. BANKS: Excellent. Excellent to  
15 put a nice cap on this. I want to acknowledge  
16 that there is a comment/question to you,  
17 Broderick. I don't know if you see it in the  
18 chat.

19 And I haven't read it all together,  
20 it sounds like they're asking you to give a  
21 billion dollars but I don't know. You can look  
22 at this --

1           MR. JOHNSON:     I'll take it under  
2     advisement. I can't, I don't see the billion-  
3     dollar request in here but I'll try to find it.

4           MR. BANKS:     Take a read of it. I'll  
5     ask a question for the team right here but take  
6     a look at the question or the comment and  
7     perhaps, you know, you can handle it the way  
8     that you --

9           MR. JOHNSON:    Oh, I see, I see it  
10    here now.

11          MR. BANKS:     Okay.

12          MR. JOHNSON:    Okay, again, I'll take  
13    it under, I'll send it back to the folks in  
14    Philadelphia.

15          MR. BANKS:     Excellent, excellent.  
16    Then we can keep moving then. So, the next  
17    question I wanted to -- and we're coming to our  
18    time to be honest with you, believe it or not,  
19    so we could, like you said, we could go on for  
20    several more hours.

21                         But we are respectful of the next  
22    panel.     So, I'm going to just have two

1 questions, Jamila Bess Johnson, I'm only going  
2 to have two questions left and then we'll wrap  
3 it up.

4 So, we'll, let's try to make these  
5 last two questions, you know, somewhat quick  
6 responses. So, one of them is, actually, let me  
7 just go with one. What do you need from the  
8 federal government, the private sector or  
9 community organizations to advance the work you  
10 are doing? You guys all are doing incredible  
11 work.

12 What do you need from the federal  
13 government? What do you need from the private  
14 sector? What do you need from the community  
15 and all of that to advance the entire work that  
16 we're doing? Who wants to go first? Why don't  
17 we start, well, makes sense to me to start with  
18 Greta, you've been talking about all these  
19 things. So, give me your response to that.

20 MS. BYRUM: I, you know, I just  
21 would reiterate what I just said a couple  
22 minutes ago of remember these institutions, the

1 on the ground institutions, which you don't  
2 maybe think of as digital equity or technical  
3 organizations, they are the key and critical  
4 bridge.

5 And we need to think about building  
6 their capacity for the long term to serve that  
7 role of connecting and building trust with  
8 local communities between emergencies. So, I  
9 just would say that again and again and again  
10 and again.

11 MR. BANKS: Good, no that's good.  
12 That's good. Put your hand if you want to  
13 comment on this. Broderick, go ahead. A  
14 physical hand, not just a yellow hand, that was  
15 a good. A physical hand came up.

16 MR. JOHNSON: I guess I'm old school  
17 sometime, what can I say, right. I guess in  
18 terms of what we need from the federal  
19 government and how we can all continue to work  
20 together.

21 First, with regard to government,  
22 I'd say first, with the tens of billions of

1 dollars in infrastructure money available for  
2 deployment, it should be focused on where it  
3 needs, where it's needed, which is in much of  
4 the rural parts of the country where deployment  
5 is still, of course of lacking.

6 And there are again, it's a once in  
7 a lifetime opportunity to be able to address  
8 that with both government resources and private  
9 resources. The second, you know, the ACP is  
10 extraordinarily important as we all know.

11 But we have to make sure and  
12 government can play a key role in this in  
13 making sure that those who get the government  
14 funds to help with ACP awareness are actually  
15 out there signing people up and working with  
16 trusted organizations to do that.

17 The Congress and the Administration  
18 to work together to extend ACP. It will run  
19 out of money and that shouldn't be allowed to  
20 happen, right. This is such an important, you  
21 know, life changing program as we know for so  
22 many tens of millions.

1           And I would say this finally, that  
2 all of us need to work, you know, Greta had  
3 acknowledged that in mentioning the emergency  
4 that we're kind of beyond the emergency that we  
5 were in, at least the beginning of the pandemic  
6 and through the first year or so.

7           But that doesn't take away the need  
8 for a sense of urgency. We can't let up,  
9 right. And at the same time, we have to be  
10 patient. It may seem like a bit of an oxymoron  
11 but we have to be patient because those who are  
12 hardest to help get aware of, awareness to and  
13 to get devices and to learn how to be digital  
14 literate, digitally literate, for those  
15 Americans we can't leave behind.

16           But we have to be patient in how we  
17 address their needs and their, you know, their  
18 lack of trust for government or the lack of  
19 awareness. So, those would be the things that  
20 I would emphasize most in terms of what the  
21 government and all of us working together can  
22 do to make this truly successful.

1                   MR. BANKS: Excellent, thank you so  
2 much. We're going to Ovidiu. We have Ovidiu  
3 and then also Thu, so, Ovidiu, you go first.

4                   MR. VIORICA: Yes, absolutely.  
5 First, I'll echo that we have to continue the  
6 funding and that funding for rural, for tribal,  
7 for low-income areas, this funding is a must in  
8 established predictable programs.

9                   Because we can't just have, you  
10 know, one time here and one time there and  
11 expect people to turn on a dime and do wonders.  
12 These are long term investments and that  
13 investment has to continue.

14                   I would say the federal government  
15 should continue to engage with states directly  
16 and emphasize local engagement and partnerships  
17 because they know what their community needs  
18 best and they all bring value and important  
19 perspectives and resources, honestly.

20                   And the federal government also can  
21 remove obstacles such as streamlining permits,  
22 simplifying or ask folks to simplify the

1 deployment of infrastructure attached to  
2 utility poles and so on. There are so many in  
3 the west, there are so many federal agencies  
4 that are involved in the permitting process and  
5 that slows down progress tremendously,  
6 significantly.

7 Because they're understaffed  
8 honestly, that's the reason. They have to deal  
9 with a lot of work. And allow communities to  
10 be part of the solutions but, you know, it  
11 starts with funding and again, we cannot only  
12 fund it one time in the crisis. We have to  
13 make the funding predictable and continuous  
14 because that's what it is going to take and  
15 we'll have to stay focused and get the job  
16 done.

17 MR. BANKS: Excellent, excellent.  
18 We're getting a, somewhat of a, I don't know,  
19 everybody's on the same track here. Let's go  
20 to Thu and then we're going to go to Annette.

21 MS. NGUYEN: Yes, I mean, I just  
22 have to say it so that it's on the record and

1 that there are receipts but I just want to say  
2 internet and access to broadband is a need not  
3 a want.

4 And so, ACP needs continued funding.  
5 And then also, just resources for in language,  
6 right. I think we were doing, you know, the  
7 government either needs to set aside resources  
8 for in language support or give resources to  
9 the community organizations providing the in-  
10 language assistance because we can't do it for  
11 free for too long. But ACP funding for sure.

12 MR. BANKS: Thank you so much.  
13 Annette.

14 MS. TAYLOR: Sure, I'll keep it  
15 simple as your wrap up, Clayton. I echo all of  
16 what was said, especially the partnerships. Of  
17 course, the feedback because we need the  
18 feedback so that we can come up with the best  
19 state plans.

20 We need the investments. We cannot  
21 forget the investments. But let's not forget  
22 data sharing, okay, between all of these

1 different groups, the federal government, the  
2 private sector, ISPs, the community  
3 organizations.

4 Because we need to be able to make  
5 sure that we are addressing the appropriate  
6 solutions for the appropriate populations that  
7 we're all trying to serve. And so, you know,  
8 we just need to be able to best track our  
9 current state of things in the state.

10 And that's important in order for us  
11 to make sure we understand what the impact of  
12 all of this work that's going into this and  
13 also, obviously just be able to best provide  
14 solutions for our residents. So, thank you for  
15 the opportunity, Clayton, and look forward to  
16 continuing to work with you all.

17 MR. BANKS: Well, as a result we are  
18 at time and I am just so grateful to have had  
19 this great opportunity. I want to thank  
20 everyone on the call for FPanel One and a big  
21 virtual hug to our speakers for their service  
22 to the country today.

1 I believe that by working together  
2 we can leverage the lessons learned from this  
3 pandemic to create a more equitable, connected  
4 and resilient society.

5 Thank you, Chair Rosenworcel, for  
6 this incredible opportunity to share this  
7 important topic and thanks for everyone that's  
8 been on this call this entire time. Thank you  
9 so much. Get ready, get ready for Panel Two,  
10 thank you.

11 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you so very much  
12 and, Clayton, I just want to say that, that was  
13 a wonderful, wonderful discussion and the  
14 videotape of it will be posted on our CEDC  
15 website, [www.FCC.gov](http://www.FCC.gov)

16 We're going to pause momentarily for  
17 a brief break in the roundtable. Please come  
18 back at 11:45 and we'll be doing Panel Two on  
19 Adoption on Digital Readiness. Thank you,  
20 everyone from Panel One, thank you.

21 (Whereupon, the above-entitled  
22 matter went off the record at 11:36 a.m. and

1 resumed at 11:45 a.m.)

2 MS. ELLIS: Well, hello, this is  
3 Sarah Kate Ellis. I'm the President and CEO of  
4 GLAAD. I am moderating Panel Number Two and  
5 Panel Number Two is Adoption of Digital  
6 Readiness. I'm really excited. I hope you all  
7 were watching Panel One, they did an amazing  
8 job and I think we're going to have an  
9 insightful and interesting and informative  
10 conversation now.

11 I want to, a couple of house rules.  
12 I just want to start by actually thanking  
13 Clayton for the first panel, that was excellent  
14 and I want to thank the Commission and the  
15 Council for all the work that got us here  
16 today.

17 Couple of ground rules. Acronyms.  
18 Few of those popped up in Panel Number One and  
19 let's assume no one knows what you mean, so  
20 please just define them. I'll stop you along  
21 the way. Number two is that you can submit  
22 questions by email during this event to

1 livequestions@FCC.gov that's

2 livequestions@FCC.gov

3 All right, well let's get started.  
4 We're going to start with announcing all of our  
5 panel folks and then they're going to come in  
6 and tell you what their role is. So, first we  
7 have Norma Fernandez. Norma, can you unmute  
8 yourself, thanks.

9 MS. FERNANDEZ: Thank you for the  
10 reminder. Good morning, everyone. My name is  
11 Norma Fernandez, I'm the CEO of EveryoneOn.  
12 We're a national non-profit that has been  
13 working on the digital divide for a number of  
14 years. Excited to be joining you all today and  
15 part of the conversation.

16 MS. ELLIS: Next we have Thomas  
17 Kamber.

18 MR. KAMBER: Good morning or I  
19 guess, good morning to the people in the other  
20 time zones out there. I'm Tom Kamber, I'm the  
21 Executive Direct of Older Adults Technology  
22 Services, OATS, from AARP.

1           And we do technology programs for  
2 older adults all around the country and operate  
3 seniorplanet.org and programs at Senior Planet  
4 Centers and partnerships sites around the  
5 country. So, I'm really excited to be here  
6 today as well.

7           MS. ELLIS: Wow, we have an all-star  
8 panel. Next, we have Hal Woods, please.

9           MR. WOODS: Good morning, everybody.  
10 Hal Woods, Chief of Policy at Kids First  
11 Chicago. We are actually in education, non-  
12 profits here in Chicago. We worked on a  
13 digital divide program, Chicago Connected that  
14 I'll be excited to share with folks today.  
15 Thank you for having me.

16           MS. ELLIS: Great, thanks for being  
17 here. That's going to be really interesting.  
18 Anisa Green.

19           MS. GREEN: Hi, good afternoon,  
20 everyone. My name is Anisa, I'm with AT&T and  
21 I'm happy to be here. I work affordability and  
22 the digital divide issues for our federal

1 regulatory team.

2 MS. ELLIS: That's great. Ji Soo.

3 MR. SONG: Good morning, everyone.

4 My name is Ji Soo Song, serving as the Digital  
5 Equity Advisor here at the Office of  
6 Educational Technology at the U.S. Department  
7 of Education.

8 My role is to collaborate with  
9 agencies across the federal government  
10 including the wonderful folks at the FCC to  
11 help maximize the reach of programs and  
12 policies that support broadband access and  
13 digital equity for our learners.

14 Our office, OET, so Office of  
15 Educational Technology sits within the policy  
16 office at the Department of Education and our  
17 role is to set that national vision for how  
18 technology can be used to transform teaching  
19 and learning. Happy to be here.

20 MS. ELLIS: Thanks for being here  
21 and I'll give, did Stephan Adams make it in? I  
22 can't see all -- oh, yeah, hi, Stephan.

1 MR. ADAMS: Good morning. Good  
2 morning, everybody. Stephan Adams, President  
3 and CEO of Virgin Islands Next Generation  
4 Network. We're the middle mile carrier for the  
5 entire Virgin Islands and all the ISPs use our  
6 services to get from the islands to the states  
7 and in between.

8 MS. ELLIS: That's great. That's  
9 going to be really interesting. So, let's  
10 start with you, Norma. Our first question,  
11 it's probably going to be a round robin and if  
12 any panelists want to jump in also and don't  
13 feel like they're being heard, please raise  
14 your hand.

15 I'm paying very close attention.  
16 So, let's start with question number one. What  
17 if any programs did you or your members  
18 implement during the pandemic regarding  
19 broadband adoption and digital readiness?

20 MS. FERNANDEZ: Sure, thank you for  
21 the question. So, for a little context,  
22 EveryoneON, as I mentioned, is a national

1 organization and we have local reach in a  
2 number of communities across the country  
3 including Los Angeles, the Bay Area, Milwaukee,  
4 El Paso and a number of other cities where do a  
5 number of things.

6 One is drive awareness of an  
7 adoption of low cost or subsidized and it  
8 offers, like the Affordable Connectivity  
9 Program, we donate computers to families in  
10 need. In particular K-12 households.

11 And we also provide digital skills  
12 training, so we we're really keen on making  
13 sure that folks not only have the tools in  
14 their household but also make sure that they  
15 know how to utilize it. So, have that comfort  
16 level and that confidence to really leverage  
17 the power of technology at home.

18 And so, we were doing a lot of this  
19 work prior to pandemic but since the pandemic  
20 unfolded, we did a couple of things to really  
21 expand our reach and our impact. One is that  
22 we started offering more capacity building

1 trainings to diverse organizations.

2 Previously we had done extensive  
3 work with the Department of Housing and Urban  
4 Development or HUD, working with public housing  
5 agencies across the country, sort of helping  
6 develop their capacity around how to deliver or  
7 how to design and deliver digital inclusion  
8 programs.

9 Since the pandemic we expanded that  
10 capacity building training to ensure that we  
11 were also reaching libraries, other non-  
12 profits, advocacy organizations.

13 Because as we all saw, a number of  
14 organizations that had not been doing this work  
15 all of a sudden found themselves needing to  
16 ensure their families were connected, had  
17 devices and training.

18 So, we were in an excellent position  
19 to be able to package our training if you will  
20 and offer it to a number of organizations.  
21 We've trained well over 300 organizations in a  
22 matter of a couple of years and that number is

1 growing, especially now with all the attention  
2 around the Affordability Connectivity Program  
3 or ACP.

4 In fact, just last week we hosted a  
5 training for organization in Los Angeles. Over  
6 45 attended who are now going to go out and not  
7 only know about ACP but also start spreading  
8 the word about it.

9 So, that's one key thing that we  
10 did. The other was that we pivoted to deliver  
11 our digital skills trainings in a virtual  
12 format. So, of course we couldn't, you know,  
13 deliver it in person. So, we worked  
14 extensively with our non-profit partners,  
15 again, across the country to be able to deliver  
16 our trainings virtually.

17 So, you can imagine that wasn't an  
18 easy fit, feat, I should say, right. Trying to  
19 figure out how do we get devices to people, how  
20 do we, you know, where do we set them up, so  
21 they can participate and do training. We  
22 developed a structure that allowed up to

1 deliver the training virtually and it's been  
2 very successful.

3 MS. ELLIS: That's amazing. I  
4 think, something really interesting that maybe  
5 we can surface here as well as how do you scale  
6 eventually? So, Hal, I'll turn to you now, same  
7 question. What did you implement during the  
8 pandemic regarding broadband adoption and  
9 digital readiness?

10 MR. WOODS: Thank you, Sarah Kate.  
11 So, it's a little over a year ago, almost to  
12 the day or I should say three years ago to the  
13 day. So, on March 13th, 2020 Chicago schools,  
14 which is the fourth largest school district in  
15 the country went fully remote.

16 School was shut down. Kids for  
17 Chicago, so again, we're an education non-  
18 profit advocacy organization but we reached out  
19 to about 200 parents in our network and we  
20 said, what are the biggest issues that you're  
21 facing right now.

22 And continued conversations revealed

1 that lack of broadband internet adoption at  
2 home was one of the top issues. So, even  
3 though we traditionally do more sort of  
4 education policy issues, we knew that we needed  
5 to research the issue.

6 We found that about one out of five  
7 kids in the City of Chicago did not have  
8 broadband at home. Primarily in the city's  
9 hardest, the highest hardship communities as  
10 well. We released a report to kind of elevate  
11 the issue, put a number to it and also come up  
12 with some recommendations.

13 That ultimately spurred a  
14 partnership between the City of Chicago,  
15 Chicago Public Schools and about 30 community-  
16 based organizations, philanthropy as well as  
17 internet service providers to launch Chicago  
18 Connected, which really, we really felt was the  
19 country's most comprehensive internet  
20 connectivity program for students.

21 Since we launched Chicago Connected,  
22 we have served over 60,000 households, 100,000

1 students and nearly one out of three CPS  
2 students. We've also been able to over, we  
3 halved, and actually more than halved the  
4 digital divide for households with kids in the  
5 City of Chicago.

6 We're at a place now where 93  
7 percent, this is from the most recent census  
8 data in 2021 but 93 percent of all households  
9 in the State of Chicago with kids now have  
10 highspeed internet at home and internet enabled  
11 device at home.

12 We've also provided adults who  
13 enrolled in the program with about 30,000 hours  
14 of digital learning support and training as  
15 well. In addition to having dozens of device  
16 distribution events with non-profit providers  
17 here in Chicago as well.

18 MS. ELLIS: Wow, that's phenomenal.  
19 Anisa, I'll turn to you now from a corporate  
20 perspective on this.

21 MS. GREEN: Oh, thank you. So, I'm  
22 sure many of you heard this in the first panel

1 as well. When we talk about the digital  
2 divide, we often hear the interplay between  
3 broadband access, adoption and affordability.

4 And we were laser focused on  
5 attempting to address all three when the  
6 pandemic hit as my fellow panelist mentioned  
7 almost three years ago to the date. And so,  
8 during the pandemic we were laser focused on  
9 making sure every American was connected to  
10 highspeed broadband service, so they could  
11 participate in work, school and more.

12 We were one of the first broadband  
13 providers to raise our hands and elect to  
14 participate in the Emergency Broadband Benefit  
15 program, EBB, that is now the Affordability  
16 Connectivity Program, ACP.

17 We committed to spend \$2 billion  
18 between 2021 and 2023 to help those who need to  
19 get connected get connected. Our access from  
20 AT&T product offers eligible customers with  
21 highspeed broadband service for \$30 a month and  
22 coupled with the ACP, the now ACP, eligible

1 households can get broadband access for no  
2 cost.

3 A few examples of additional  
4 programs that we developed to help drive  
5 broadband adoption. We stood up additional  
6 connected learning centers and this is a  
7 collaborative effort with local communities  
8 that provide students and families with free  
9 access to highspeed fiber internet, Wi-Fi,  
10 technology resources and digital literacy  
11 content.

12 We currently have hubs that stand  
13 from Raleigh, North Carolina to Los Angeles and  
14 Houston to Chicago and we have committed to  
15 opening more than 50 nationwide. We also  
16 created a \$10 million distance learning and  
17 family connections fund to expand online  
18 learning resources and develop new learning  
19 resources designed for COVID-19 school  
20 closures.

21 We also partnered with the Public  
22 Library Association to offer free digital

1 literacy skills and courses and workshops.  
2 There are, these courses will teach internet  
3 basic skills to help encourage broadband  
4 adoption.

5 I know that we have a couple more  
6 minutes together during this panel, so I'll  
7 reserve more of those examples for our later  
8 questions. Thank you, Sarah Kate.

9 MS. ELLIS: Thank you, I think the  
10 partnership between civil society and corporate  
11 is really critical, especially in those  
12 emergency situations. Thomas, do you want to  
13 comment on this for OATS as well?

14 MR. KAMBER: Sure, and I think some  
15 of work echoes, you have some of the thinking  
16 that Norma and Hal and Anisa and others are  
17 saying, so I'll try to not over, not repeat too  
18 much.

19 But OATS does technology training  
20 for seniors. We've been doing it since 2004  
21 and primarily we've been doing it in Senior  
22 Planet Centers in New York City and then other

1 cities like Denver or upstate New York in  
2 Plattsburg and through partnerships.

3 And when the COVID crisis began we  
4 were already teaching some online courses in a  
5 hybrid format, so we had about 100 modules of  
6 technology training that were available to be  
7 converted online. So, we were kind of in a, at  
8 the starting line with some materials there.

9 But everybody had to learn to teach  
10 on Zoom, so we did the quick, you know, pivot  
11 format change that everybody was going through  
12 and within 60 days had pretty much all of our  
13 curriculum online.

14 But we had to reformat everything  
15 because our courses go for 10 weeks and nobody  
16 is going to take a 10-week class online with  
17 the same level of scheduling that they'll come  
18 to a center. It doesn't work quite like that,  
19 so we learned a lot about how to do things  
20 differently.

21 Around the same time the City of New  
22 York gave away 10,000 tablets to residents of

1 the New York City Housing Authority and they  
2 asked if -- to older adults -- and they asked  
3 if we would do the training. So, we created a  
4 call center that helped people with the  
5 unboxing of the tablets.

6 We developed an online training  
7 course for people where they could take a five-  
8 week class to learn how to use the tablets and  
9 we organized it with the Android device so  
10 people could get the materials.

11 There's actually a study that we did  
12 with a Cornell University researcher showing  
13 the results of people taking those courses.  
14 What kinds of social engagement outcomes they  
15 got. So, we also did some studies as well and  
16 got some data there.

17 And we were able to make that case  
18 that investments in digital inclusion  
19 programming make a huge difference in people's  
20 wellbeing. Their social engagement, their  
21 loneliness statistics with UCLA Loneliness  
22 survey with all sorts of data points there.

1                   And then at the same time we ended  
2 up sort of creating this corporate affiliation  
3 with AARP and so, that was a real game changer  
4 for us. We became a structural corporate  
5 relation affiliate with the organization at  
6 AARP, which gave us access to all 50 AARP state  
7 offices as potential channels and started  
8 distributing our programs nationwide through  
9 licensing agreements.

10                   Couple of additional surveys and  
11 then finally, we had some corporate  
12 partnerships and have worked with AT&T in the  
13 past. We worked with Humana Foundation that  
14 did a \$3 million grant for a project called  
15 Aging Connected to help support EBB and other -  
16 - Emergency Broadband Benefit, we're trying to  
17 stay away from acronyms here.

18                   And help people with these critical  
19 subsidy programs and supporting the Affordable  
20 Connectivity Program as well now. And so,  
21 we've been working with corporate support to  
22 build these relationships out around the

1 country.

2 T-Mobile recently announced \$1  
3 million grant to OATS to do this work in rural  
4 areas, so we're trying to bridge those  
5 resources to make sure we can reach into  
6 communities with high quality programming.

7 MS. ELLIS: That's great. Stephan,  
8 I'm wondering if you have a view on this,  
9 especially coming from the Virgin Islands and  
10 what worked for you during this?

11 MR. ADAMS: Well, thank you and good  
12 morning, everybody. I wish I could be as  
13 glowing about it as my peers here. In the  
14 Virgin Islands, it was the pits. We didn't have  
15 any of this, mainly because we're 3,000 miles  
16 away from everybody, well, not that far. But  
17 we're around the middle of the Atlantic, so  
18 it's very difficult. We don't have as far--we  
19 don't have the resources.

20 So one of the base issues that we  
21 had right when the pandemic hit, when the  
22 schools went to virtual classes, we didn't have

1 ready supplies of tablets. We didn't have  
2 connectivity to locations. In a lot of  
3 locations where we did, like in public housing,  
4 which we have a disproportionate amount of our  
5 territory in public housing, you'd have one  
6 tablet and three or four kids on one tablet.

7           So we had tremendous issues with  
8 logistics issues, not only the timing of  
9 getting tablets and computers here, but also a  
10 lot of the people who were working, mothers in  
11 particular, couldn't take time off school [sic]  
12 to supervise their kids to use the tablets. So  
13 it was a debacle here for quite a while.  
14 Finally we got it together probably after the  
15 first 12 months, but the first 12 months, we're  
16 still suffering from the digital lag that  
17 happened here in the territory.

18           One of the things that our agency  
19 did, since we're the middle mile provider, is  
20 that we provided free internet and subsidized  
21 internet to all the ISPs. So the only thing we  
22 could do was to say okay, let's open it up,

1 make it free, no throttling, all that. So  
2 that's the only thing that we really could do,  
3 but the resources were slow and few to come to  
4 the Virgin Islands. So the only really thing we  
5 could do was provide access.

6 Now going forward, for the next  
7 pandemic what we've done is that viNGN is the  
8 provider of the outreach program for the  
9 Affordable Connectivity Program. We're also  
10 working with the NTIA on the BEAD and digital  
11 equity programs. So all those programs now  
12 going forward, we're in a very good position to  
13 be able to harness our federal partners to make  
14 sure that we're more equipped, but this is in  
15 the aftermath.

16 MS. ELLIS: We'll get to that part.

17 MR. ADAMS: Right.

18 MS. ELLIS: Ji Soo, I just didn't  
19 want to leave you out, unless you have anything  
20 to contribute we can move on to the next.

21 MR. SONG: Sure. We can talk a little  
22 bit about what our office has done and the

1 perspective that we're trying to provide on  
2 this issue. So a little bit of background, we  
3 know that as we continue recovering from the  
4 pandemic, educators are increasingly leveraging  
5 some of the active and innovative learning  
6 approaches that are made possible through  
7 technology. We also see schools that are  
8 accelerating the implementation of whole  
9 learner approaches that are supported by  
10 technology, as well.

11           When you think about socioemotional  
12 developments for parent/educator conferences  
13 that aren't limited by physical time and space,  
14 and other types of wraparound support. We have  
15 an opportunity, as Stephan pointed out, under  
16 the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, for these  
17 types of opportunities to become a lot more  
18 equitably and sustainably at scale, especially  
19 due to additional equity act programs that NCIA  
20 is running.

21           So when the bill was first passed,  
22 our office, knowing that we're not the lead

1 agency on all those digital equity efforts,  
2 asked ourselves a series of questions. Thinking  
3 about what the Department of Education's role  
4 can be in helping maximize the impact of that  
5 \$65 million broadband package, especially as  
6 state leaders develop plans for spending those  
7 dollars, and in carrying out this role how we  
8 can help increase access for learners and their  
9 families who are furthest from digital  
10 opportunities.

11 So we launched a digital equity  
12 initiative known as our Digital Equity  
13 Education Roundtables Initiative, or a DEER  
14 initiative, where we held a series of national  
15 conversations, listening sessions with  
16 communities and organizations, learners,  
17 families, that are championing education and  
18 digital access, where we had a chance to talk  
19 about three major things. Some of the most  
20 pressing barriers that learner communities  
21 face, prongs and strategies to overcome those  
22 barriers, and notable examples of those

1 strategies that are in practice right now.

2 We used all of those conversations,  
3 the data that we gathered, to develop guidance  
4 for leaders as they begin developing those  
5 state plans, state digital equity plans. We  
6 were able to launch this resource back in  
7 September of last year at our National Digital  
8 Equity Summit. You can find that resource on  
9 tech.ed.gov/deer. Most specifically to this  
10 conversation, the topic of this panel, we  
11 intentionally in our guidance give the most  
12 attention to that issue of adoption because the  
13 education sector knows well that it's not  
14 enough to make technology available and  
15 affordable, although those are really critical  
16 pieces.

17 We also need to take a human  
18 approach to the issue, as our other panelists  
19 talked about, meeting communities where they  
20 are, helping them use technology in ways that  
21 supports their individual goals and needs. So  
22 in later questions I can talk about some of the

1 other things that we're doing, but that's  
2 something that we are bringing to the table on  
3 this digital equity and adoption conversation.

4 MS. ELLIS: That's great. Norma, I  
5 will start this, another question, which is  
6 what worked well in reaching the diversity of  
7 the communities you serve? I guess also what  
8 didn't go well, so we can learn from that, as  
9 well? This is all about sharing information and  
10 learning.

11 MS. FERNANDEZ: Sure. I'll start off  
12 with the positive, what worked well. Certainly  
13 in the work that we do, again driving broadband  
14 adoption, getting devices out to folks and  
15 providing digital skills training, we needed to  
16 ensure that we were working with organizations  
17 that were embedded in the various communities  
18 that we work with, and specifically  
19 organizations that had built trust over time  
20 with the populations that we were attempting to  
21 reach.

22 We certainly saw it during the

1 pandemic, especially at the beginning. A lot of  
2 these, in particular, non-profits, public  
3 housing agencies, as well, community health  
4 clinics, really organized themselves to meet  
5 the needs beyond what their regular services  
6 offered. We saw organizations doing food  
7 drives. We saw organizations donating devices.  
8 We saw them do a number of things that were  
9 really critical to the communities that they  
10 serve, which were also the same communities  
11 that were disproportionately affected by the  
12 pandemic, as well as the digital divide.

13           So for us it was really important to  
14 engage those organizations and really, most  
15 importantly, work with them to identify what  
16 were the best outreach strategies? What were  
17 the best ways to get connected with the  
18 community members that they serve? How do we  
19 customize our digital skills curriculum to  
20 ensure that we're meeting the needs of the  
21 participants that we're aiming to train? That  
22 was really critical.

1           I'll mention really briefly that we  
2 actually conducted a national research project  
3 during the pandemic. It was funded by Microsoft  
4 and the Ballmer Group to look at the digital  
5 divide in the midst of the pandemic. One thing  
6 that really stood out, I think we already knew,  
7 but it was important to still get it out there,  
8 is that of the serving participants, 65% said  
9 that they trusted a combination of libraries,  
10 schools and non-profits to learn about  
11 resources.

12           We asked specifically at that time  
13 about the emergency broadband benefit. Again,  
14 upwards of 60% said they were learning about  
15 those kind of programs through these  
16 combination of organizations. So we can't  
17 underestimate how important it is to work with  
18 trusted organizations in various communities.

19           MS. ELLIS: That's great. That's  
20 really interesting. Thank you for sharing that.  
21 Hal, how did reaching diverse audiences and  
22 communities, how did you get that done during

1 this pandemic?

2 MR. WOODS: It's a great segue from  
3 what Norma was just talking about. So I would  
4 say in Chicago it's a very special and unique  
5 partnership between government, community  
6 organizations, NSS providers, philanthropy,  
7 again a \$40 or \$50 million program. But really  
8 specifically, our community-based  
9 organizations, so to Norma's point, the  
10 community anchor institutions, these were  
11 organizations that in some cases had done  
12 nothing on digital divide prior to the  
13 pandemic.

14 Really they were doing contact  
15 tracing, they were doing food drives, they were  
16 doing other support services in those  
17 communities. Very trusted partners with  
18 participants in those communities, and they  
19 were invaluable. So on the outreach side in  
20 terms of getting families signed up for Chicago  
21 Connected, they helped bridge trust gaps. We  
22 had issues right from the very beginning--you

1 asked about what didn't work. One of the things  
2 was when we were doing mass marketing, talking  
3 about free internet, sending text messages to  
4 families, click here for free internet.

5 Nobody wanted to click on that. I  
6 think we were all taught nothing in life is  
7 free. So having community partners follow up,  
8 we changed our marketing, our messaging, and  
9 said this is actually no cost to you. That was  
10 a big shift, and we saw numbers skyrocket after  
11 that. But our community organizations, being  
12 able to call and answer a family's questions,  
13 any concern that they had, was truly very, very  
14 impactful.

15 Also just being able to reach  
16 families in non-traditional ways, so not just  
17 calling and texting, but actually being at a  
18 food drive or other community events, even  
19 during the pandemic, was also super-helpful, in  
20 addition just to being ambassadors for the  
21 program. I would say on the digital learning  
22 side, our community partners have designed

1 their own community-specific digital learning  
2 programs.

3 So we offer through the program  
4 opportunities to be able to use content from  
5 Northstar, from Coursera to meet learners'  
6 needs. But we've also allowed our community  
7 organizations to be very entrepreneurial and  
8 innovative when it comes to designing their own  
9 programs. So for example, we have the YMCA  
10 Metro Chicago here that has a bilingual help  
11 desk for tech questions. More basic  
12 foundational information, how do I turn on my  
13 computer, how do I set up an email account.

14 But then being able to pair those  
15 types of opportunities with higher-level  
16 certification programs as well. We've got a few  
17 organizations here in Northwest Center that's  
18 been doing work in a cohort model where  
19 essentially they're working with groups of 10  
20 to 12 parents. They go through a 10-week  
21 rigorous course, they complete, they graduate,  
22 actually get certifications. There's a whole

1 graduation ceremony for the families that are  
2 part of the program.

3 Then some of those families actually  
4 go and teach the next cohort, so it becomes  
5 almost like a workforce development  
6 opportunity, as well. Then with actually  
7 getting devices out to families, our partners  
8 here on the ground, Computdopt, PCs for People,  
9 which I know have national reach as well, they  
10 were able to partner with community-based  
11 organizations to design lottery opportunities  
12 for families.

13 In some cases just having enough  
14 devices for whoever signed up and being able to  
15 partner on device distribution events. But the  
16 trust for community organizations was just an  
17 incredible benefit of the program. We would not  
18 have been successful without it.

19 MS. ELLIS: Partnership and trust I'm  
20 hearing quite a bit of. Thomas, I'm sure that  
21 was a lot of your experience, as well. But in  
22 terms of getting to these diverse communities,

1 even within the older community, you're talking  
2 about Black and Brown folks. You're talking  
3 about LGBTQ folks. How do you get to those who  
4 are marginalized even within a segment of the  
5 community?

6 MR. KAMBER: We did a couple of  
7 things that seemed to work. First of all, in  
8 our online programs, we made them almost  
9 friction-free for people to sign up by not  
10 requiring pre-registration for most of our  
11 classes. We experimented a bit with this, but  
12 found that when we created high-quality  
13 programming that was really easy for people to  
14 access with a single click, we had larger  
15 numbers and we were able to reach--last year we  
16 did 380,000 engagements with our course.

17 But in order to reach more people  
18 that were in different demographics, we  
19 translated all of our materials into Spanish  
20 and a large number of them into Chinese. In all  
21 of the course materials now, 35% of the OATS  
22 classroom materials are now in another

1 language. We delivered the first 10-week  
2 training program in Montgomery County last year  
3 in Chinese that we've ever done. That went  
4 online and has been used in other sites around  
5 the country.

6 Then we worked with localities that  
7 have particular communities that they're  
8 serving. So we got Barrett County committed to  
9 use some of their funds to promote broadband  
10 access and the technology distribution program  
11 that we supported there. We're working with  
12 Santa Clara County in California, and we're  
13 reaching into Miami now. We're going to be  
14 opening a center there later this year serving  
15 people in Miami with technology programs, as  
16 well.

17 So we're actually leveraging AARP  
18 quite a bit to target certain communities that  
19 we can reach. We called up AARP's research team  
20 and said we'd like to figure out the most  
21 effective places that we can make a difference,  
22 and we calculated two different variables. One

1 is how many older people have broadband access  
2 at home, what percentage? And then we  
3 calculated 18 to 64, the younger population,  
4 and we subtracted the larger number from the  
5 small one so we got the gap between young and  
6 old around technology.

7 Then we organized it, we mapped it  
8 across the country and picked localities where  
9 the gap was the largest. Those are places where  
10 our work is most powerfully needed and we've  
11 been able to identify those communities and  
12 start investing more in those areas with our  
13 licensing initiatives to make sure that we're  
14 reaching people that otherwise wouldn't be able  
15 to get online.

16 One more thing, rural, lots of work  
17 on rural.

18 MS. ELLIS: I was going to say--

19 MR. KAMBER: Rural communities are  
20 often left out, and it's a kind of critical  
21 area around this work. They have special  
22 considerations in terms of the access, in terms

1 of how the companies and the competition, it  
2 lays out for the consumers there. It really  
3 requires a different set of approaches in the  
4 content and the institutional supports are  
5 different. So we've been working in Upstate New  
6 York, but also rural Colorado and Texas and  
7 other areas to have special programming for  
8 rural communities.

9 We did a project supported by  
10 Schmidt Futures with the New York Library  
11 Association across the northern counties that  
12 border with Canada. There's been a real effort  
13 to bring rural people online, and I know a lot  
14 of other people on this call have been working  
15 with those rural communities. But I really want  
16 to make sure we're emphasizing the needs of  
17 those individuals and citizens out there. It's  
18 really making a big difference.

19 MS. ELLIS: And was that where you  
20 saw the biggest gap, if you had to lay it out?  
21 What were the places--

22 MR. KAMBER: The biggest gaps were

1 interestingly in, a lot of them were in urban  
2 areas for the gaps, because what you found in  
3 the gaps was that they have a lot of  
4 connectivity. So the younger population was  
5 online mostly for work and social purposes. And  
6 then in many of the cities they tend to have a  
7 lower income population of older adults who had  
8 trouble affording the internet before the  
9 Affordable Connectivity Program existed.

10 So the historical trend has been  
11 that in many communities, you've got that older  
12 adult population that the access is there. But  
13 the money wasn't necessarily there and they  
14 didn't always have the resources in terms of  
15 free quality training. I know that Norma has  
16 been doing all this work in getting people  
17 online in different places in Chicago and  
18 elsewhere. But there just aren't enough  
19 training programs on the ground. There hasn't  
20 been enough resources to help people in the  
21 urban areas.

22 In rural areas, a lot more younger

1 people are offline, as well, so the gap isn't  
2 quite as big. The connectivity rates are lower  
3 and people are struggling. Many rural  
4 households don't have high-speed internet right  
5 to their home yet, or it's prohibitively  
6 expensive to make that connection or support  
7 the network over time. Even things like tax  
8 patterns in certain states make it difficult  
9 for folks. So we really have to solve that  
10 program in different ways in different  
11 geographies.

12 MS. ELLIS: Thank you for that,  
13 Thomas. Does anybody else want to contribute to  
14 that before we move on to the next question?

15 MR. ADAMS: I would.

16 MS. ELLIS: Great.

17 MR. ADAMS: Sorry, go ahead. One of  
18 the things that--I sound like a Debbie Downer  
19 here, but one of the things that happened  
20 originally, the Virgin Islands is a rural  
21 community, and a disadvantaged community on top  
22 of that. But one of the things that was really

1 unique to the Virgin Islands and the mainland  
2 is that the pandemic happened just a few years  
3 after Hurricane Irma and Maria.

4 So when Irma and Maria came through,  
5 Irma and Maria wiped out all of our community  
6 access institutions. So the libraries, which  
7 would normally be a place for distance learning  
8 and telemedicine, all of that, all of our  
9 libraries were destroyed and we're still  
10 building them back. The churches and community  
11 centers and non-profits that would also be  
12 agencies to help the community were all  
13 destroyed and still being rebuilt.

14 So what happened was that the non-  
15 profit organizations and government agencies  
16 that would normally come to help for the  
17 pandemic weren't able to do so. So then it was  
18 the private sector, and the profit motive of  
19 the private sector, they fought with each other  
20 and then they fought with the public sector. So  
21 it took us a year to be able to get a  
22 coordinated effort on how to address distant

1 learning, in particular, in the territory  
2 because we're still reeling from the hurricanes  
3 of 2017, and we're still in the aftermath of  
4 that.

5 So one of the things that viNGN was  
6 thrust into was trying to be a mediator and  
7 trying to elevate our stature because we're a  
8 semi-autonomous government agency, but we're  
9 also interfaced with the private sector. So  
10 here in the Virgin Islands--we also left out  
11 Guam, American Samoa, the territories were all  
12 left out. So the Microsoft study is a fantastic  
13 study, but they missed the Virgin Islands.

14 They missed Guam. They missed  
15 American Samoa. So a lot of the national  
16 resources and data that's available, none of  
17 that data has the territories inclusive in  
18 them. We're still islands, even in the national  
19 conversation because we don't exist, mainly  
20 because of our size, also because of our  
21 geography. So that would be nice to be able to  
22 be included in some of these national studies.

1                   Lastly, I would say that the number  
2 one partner that we have going forward, which  
3 is more positive here, is AARP. AARP has a  
4 disproportionate influence in the Virgin  
5 Islands, so we use them heavily on trying to  
6 craft our digital equity programs going forward  
7 and our ACP outreach programs. So we're relying  
8 on AARP because not only do they deal with the  
9 elderly population, but they've also been very  
10 instrumental in dealing with the low-income  
11 population here, as well. From a covered  
12 population, they are our top go-to partner.

13                   MS. ELLIS: That's great. Thank you  
14 for sharing that. Norma?

15                   MS. FERNANDEZ: Yeah, thank you. I  
16 wanted to add that with the theme around  
17 reaching diverse communities, I think two  
18 things stood out for us, as well. One was that  
19 it was important as we implemented our  
20 capacity-building trainings or train the  
21 trainer trainings, that we were training folks  
22 from the communities that we were serving. So

1 one example is that with the Housing Authority  
2 of the City of Los Angeles, or HACLA, we  
3 implemented a train the trainer specifically  
4 around the emergency broadband benefit and now  
5 ACP, and just broadly digital inclusion  
6 resources.

7 We were targeting community health  
8 workers, so HACLA was already training fellow  
9 residents to get the word out on vaccine  
10 information, other critical services. So we  
11 were able to plug into that existing training  
12 and talk about ACP as an example. So these were  
13 folks that were living in their communities,  
14 knew their neighbors and the surrounding  
15 community. That was just a great way in our  
16 effort to reach broadly a larger number of  
17 people, but also folks that represented the  
18 community.

19 So that's one thing, making sure  
20 that we're training folks from the community to  
21 also help get the word out. The other is that  
22 in our delivery of our digital skills

1 trainings, we were very intentional about  
2 recruiting people from diverse backgrounds.  
3 Because we deliver our trainings in a  
4 virtual/hybrid format, we're able to attract  
5 people from across the country. These are folks  
6 that are professionals in their own right.

7           They are graduate students. We had a  
8 couple of professors that signed up to be our  
9 instructors, which was really cool, and other  
10 folks that were just looking to have some sort  
11 of social impact in the country. So again, we  
12 were intentional about recruiting folks that  
13 have diverse backgrounds, lived experiences  
14 that in some way may reflect the populations  
15 that we serve. It was really neat to hear from  
16 our digital skills participants that they loved  
17 meeting people from across the country.

18           So we had folks in LA that were  
19 being trained by folks in New York and Florida.  
20 Thanks to technology, they were able to make  
21 that connection virtually and learn from each  
22 other. So definitely two things that I think

1 are very important to consider when it comes to  
2 engaging diverse communities.

3 MS. ELLIS: Thank you for sharing  
4 that. Let's move on to our third question,  
5 which is what strategies worked well that you  
6 would share with other leaders? What went well  
7 for you that you would share with your peers?  
8 I'll start with Stephan on that one.

9 MR. ADAMS: What worked well for--  
10 again I'll just start optimistically, right?

11 MS. ELLIS: Yeah, we're making you be  
12 optimistic today.

13 MR. ADAMS: Turning my curmudgeon  
14 around. What worked well for us eventually was  
15 something that our governor did, and that was,  
16 he came on the radio. When I spoke about the  
17 hurricanes, he spoke about the pandemic as  
18 being another hurricane. He rallied the  
19 community around being self-sufficient. Puerto  
20 Rico wasn't going to come to our aid, the  
21 mainland wasn't going to come to our aid, so we  
22 had to rely on ourselves.

1           What happened with that as it  
2           pertains to broadband is that you got more  
3           people sharing of resources that they did have,  
4           which is exactly what we do here under a severe  
5           hurricane situation. So even though we didn't  
6           have a lot of resources, there was a lot of  
7           sharing of infrastructure that people had,  
8           whether it be connectivity, whether it be a  
9           device or know-how. So that was one of the  
10          things that worked really well is that the  
11          community itself did exactly, it hunkered down  
12          for the pandemic and shared resources. That was  
13          the leadership of our governor, and that is  
14          something that worked really well here.

15                 MS. ELLIS: That's great. Leadership.  
16           Hal, you had some things to share with us that  
17           worked well, as well?

18                 MR. WOODS: Yeah, I would say first  
19           and foremost, I think as you're designing  
20           programs it's critical to actually involve the  
21           users in that design. So I think whether we had  
22           community partners, but also families that are

1 in the program, we did digital learning, for  
2 example. When we lost the connectivity portion,  
3 we had to move quickly. It was a crisis, it was  
4 an emergency. We had to get folks on the  
5 internet as soon as possible or else kids could  
6 not learn during the pandemic.

7 When it came to digital learning,  
8 however, we knew a ton of information about CPS  
9 public school students. We knew nothing about  
10 their families. We knew nothing about the  
11 adults in the household. We knew nothing about  
12 their learning interests, their employment  
13 rates, what types of content they wanted to  
14 study, what types of information. How did they  
15 actually want to consume that information,  
16 whether it be remote, whether it be classes,  
17 whether it be participating with other  
18 individuals.

19 So we had to really design it in  
20 partnership with our stakeholders. So we did a  
21 series of surveys. We've done surveys every  
22 single year in the program. We work really hard

1 to get good response rates. We've gotten over  
2 5,000 responses out of 60,000 households every  
3 single year that we've done the survey. But  
4 we've kind of designed the programs based on  
5 what people ask for, and offering that spectrum  
6 of opportunities. That's why I think we've seen  
7 so much usage and so much positive reactions  
8 from our families about the program itself.

9 I would also say surveys and other  
10 ways of collecting data with the spirit of  
11 continuous improvement are really essential to  
12 being able to identify where there are  
13 challenges in the program. For example, when we  
14 first launched the program, we were able to see  
15 from folks taking the survey in Spanish that  
16 they had longer wait times than others. That  
17 was one of the biggest complaints, was longer  
18 wait times to sign up. So we were able to go to  
19 our internet service providers and say hey,  
20 here's what the data is saying.

21 You're doing fine with English-  
22 speaking folks, that's not a big complaint. But

1 with our Spanish-speaking families, that's a  
2 concern. So they were able to add extra  
3 Spanish-speaking customer service  
4 representatives in the call centers to be able  
5 to help those families get signed up. So I  
6 think a spirit of continuous improvement is  
7 really essential to ensure that the program not  
8 only meets its intended uses, but also that  
9 you're continuing to collect information to  
10 make sure that if there are opportunities for  
11 improvement, that you can make those along the  
12 way.

13 MS. ELLIS: That's great. I love that  
14 spirit of continuous improvement. Thomas, do  
15 you want to chime in on what you would share,  
16 as well, with other leaders that went well?

17 MR. KAMBER: Yeah, I think what went  
18 well for us was really partnerships,  
19 partnerships, partnerships. That's the thing  
20 that we learned about. I hate to beat that drum  
21 a little bit, but everybody uses the word, but  
22 then they don't dig into what it really means.

1 We've always been working, doing programs at  
2 different people's community centers and  
3 helping. But what we found was that with the  
4 growing need that was out there, we knew that  
5 we had a process similar to a lot of people on  
6 the panel, especially I know Norma's work.

7           What we do works, and we know it  
8 works. But what we don't know is how to get  
9 from 1,000 people to 10,000 or 100,000. In  
10 order to do that, you have to leverage larger-  
11 scale institutions. We've got the materials,  
12 we've got the expertise, but I can't hire 500  
13 trainers overnight. We don't have the capacity  
14 to do that.

15           So we created a program called  
16 Senior Planet Licensing, which was originally  
17 just supposed to be in rural areas where we  
18 knew we couldn't get the infrastructure built  
19 for our own programs, but it was already out  
20 there, mostly in libraries, but also in a lot  
21 of community centers, service organizations,  
22 area agencies on aging, multigenerational

1 organizations that were doing the work.

2 We created a model where  
3 organizations could apply to OATS to become  
4 licensing partners, go through a course where  
5 we would train them how to deliver our  
6 curriculum and about all the methodological  
7 stuff that we used, and also how to gather the  
8 outcome data. We don't care about the  
9 individual personal data, but we care a lot  
10 about the impact that you're having in the  
11 community using these resources. So we made our  
12 curriculum available to the licensing partners  
13 that went through that training, as long as  
14 they would agree to share back their aggregate  
15 data with us and we could make a case that  
16 we're making a difference.

17 When that program launched, we  
18 thought we might get to 50 programs around the  
19 country within a year or two. We're over 200  
20 now and counting. This year we're expecting to  
21 hit 300. So we found that partners out there  
22 are really excited to work with these

1 materials. I was on the call with CARICOM  
2 actually in the Caribbean recently, Stephan.  
3 There's a lot of interest in other countries to  
4 use a lot of these materials, as well.

5 The last thing is up the food chain  
6 from us, there are bigger organizations that  
7 provide capacity, like AARP, who's kind of a  
8 parent non-profit for us now, but also funding  
9 partners with corporations, particularly  
10 philanthropic foundations. AT&T has been super  
11 active. A lot of the telecommunications  
12 companies and healthcare insurers came out of  
13 the woodwork when COVID started and said we  
14 want to help immediately. We have emergency  
15 grants available. We have channels to  
16 distribute your programs.

17 We can help you get into  
18 communities, build relationships with public  
19 agencies. We relied on that stuff to get all  
20 the funding that we needed to get moving with  
21 this work. So those public/private non-profit  
22 partnerships were driving the resources that we

1 needed, and the community partners were  
2 delivering all this work with their expertise  
3 around the country in those neighborhoods and  
4 towns and rural areas that we couldn't  
5 otherwise have worked in.

6 MS. ELLIS: That's great. If nobody  
7 has any more to add to this, I'll move on to  
8 the next question, which is a bit--oh, Stephan?  
9 And Ji. So we'll go to Stephan and then we'll  
10 go to Ji.

11 MR. ADAMS: Yeah, I actually have a  
12 question for you, Thomas. When you mentioned  
13 CARICOM, you actually brought up--I'm really  
14 happy to hear that. I can definitely say that  
15 we would be interested. We can't help you scale  
16 up, but we can help you scale down.

17 MR. KAMBER: Or scale over.

18 MR. ADAMS: But that's still a  
19 scaling issue. Scaling down is just as  
20 difficult sometimes as scaling up. But one of  
21 the things that could be interesting in the  
22 Virgin Islands is that we could help with

1 overall CARICOM, as far as when you aggregate  
2 all CARICOM together, we make the size of Maine  
3 as a state. But the international issues that  
4 we have in the Caribbean affect us here as a US  
5 territory.

6 So it would be very interesting to  
7 learn more about that program because I think  
8 one of the things that is interesting about  
9 best practices for digital inclusion is that it  
10 goes beyond our borders. And outside of our  
11 borders affects us. The border states with  
12 Mexico is the same thing as the border islands  
13 to the Virgin Islands. Those issues impact all  
14 of us. If we can figure out how to regionalize  
15 some of these programs, I think would help us  
16 domestically, as well.

17 MR. KAMBER: Absolutely.

18 MS. ELLIS: Ji Soo?

19 MR. SONG: Yeah, I don't mean to beat  
20 a dead horse, but I just want to circle back to  
21 what Norma and Hal mentioned at the top of  
22 Question #2 around needing to leverage trusted

1 partners. I come from an immigrant background,  
2 and growing up we'd have to rely on those  
3 trusted community organizations for information  
4 about different programs, just to make sure it  
5 wasn't a scam, a program designed to collect  
6 information from my family.

7 So reflecting on that experience, I  
8 really want to double down on that strategy,  
9 leveraging those trusted bodies. Coming from  
10 the Department of Education, we know that our  
11 schools, our institutions of higher education,  
12 community colleges, those agencies and  
13 organizations can serve as those trusted hubs  
14 of information in many communities. So that's  
15 why for us, we designed a page with resources  
16 and FAQs about the Affordable Connectivity  
17 Program designed for those school leaders,  
18 designed for districts, designed for community  
19 colleges.

20 We also collaborated with  
21 organizations that convene some of the key  
22 stakeholders within the education sector that

1 are trusted. For example, most recently we  
2 worked with NAESP and NASSP, which are the  
3 National Association of Elementary School  
4 Principals and the National Association of  
5 Secondary School Principals, to let them know  
6 how principals can play a critical role in  
7 spreading information about the Affordable  
8 Connectivity Program because schools are often  
9 go-to resources for a lot of families when it  
10 comes to this type of programmatic information.

11 We also shared information about the  
12 ACP with higher education institutional leaders  
13 so that students who qualified under the Pell  
14 Grant were able to access that information and  
15 make sure that information was accurate and  
16 coming from a trusted resource, and then  
17 collaborating with trusted parent-facing  
18 organizations like Learning Heroes and PTA to  
19 make sure that their stakeholders could access  
20 information about the Affordable Connectivity  
21 Program, the benefits it provides for them, to  
22 them as well.

1           So just wanted to double-down on  
2           that strategy of identifying those community-  
3           based assets, leveraging those trusted bodies  
4           as distributors of information and technical  
5           assistance.

6           MS. ELLIS: That's great. Anisa?

7           MS. GREEN: Yeah, and I think my  
8           fellow panelists said most of what I was going  
9           to say. Those trusted partnerships are key and  
10          critical and we bolstered them. We definitely  
11          relied on them heavily to reach the communities  
12          that we serve. I think what I'm also hearing  
13          and that we also implemented during COVID was a  
14          very creative and open-minded approach to get  
15          to these solutions because we recognized very,  
16          very quickly that there was no one size fits  
17          all solution to drive action.

18          MS. ELLIS: Stephan?

19          MR. ADAMS: Yes?

20          MS. ELLIS: Your hand is up, or is it  
21          by accident?

22          MR. ADAMS: Yes, I can lower it.

1 MS. ELLIS: I thought you had  
2 something more optimistic to say.

3 MR. ADAMS: Oh yeah, more optimism?

4 MS. ELLIS: Come on, you have that  
5 Caribbean sun.

6 MR. ADAMS: The optimism is look out  
7 your window and then see if you want to take a  
8 trip to the Virgin Islands. That's the  
9 optimism.

10 MS. ELLIS: I say yes. I'm raising my  
11 hand for that. I think that's really key.  
12 Government, civil society and corporate  
13 partnerships are critical, not only in crisis  
14 situations, but even actually we wouldn't get  
15 to a crisis potentially if there was  
16 partnership there. But those are definitely  
17 best practices. So now, keeping that in mind,  
18 let's say sky's the limit, within reason. What  
19 do you need from the federal government, the  
20 private sector, or community organizations,  
21 depending on where you sit, to advance the work  
22 that you are doing?

1           So how do we build on this  
2 partnership? How do we scale, like you were  
3 saying, Thomas, and get to not only scale, but  
4 get to really hard-to-get-to places, a la the  
5 Virgin Islands or rural America. Let's go to,  
6 I'll start with Stephan on this one, if you  
7 don't mind.

8           MR. ADAMS: Thank you. Actually I  
9 appreciate that. I think the ACP program is  
10 probably one of the best programs that I've  
11 seen that would help us. However, one of the  
12 challenges we have with the ACP program is the  
13 enrollment process itself is very difficult.  
14 We're finding the difficulties are on two  
15 fronts. One is that we've found that a lot of  
16 people don't want to participate in the ACP  
17 program because they don't want to give up the  
18 personal data that's required for it.

19           They feel like the government is  
20 being intrusive just to be able to get this  
21 voucher. That's the first challenge that we  
22 have. Then the second challenge, and this is

1 one of the things we're trying to work through  
2 with AARP, is that the application process  
3 itself is cumbersome. So if it could be--and  
4 then people are wondering, is this only for one  
5 year? Is it for two years? How long is this  
6 program?

7 What we are finding here is that the  
8 ISPs don't like it because we're only 87,000  
9 people. So there's not that much to defray the  
10 costs for the ISPs to offer the program. So  
11 they're like, yeah, we offer it but we're not  
12 talking about it, because they can't upsell off  
13 the program. So if there's more that the  
14 federal government can do to help make the--to  
15 lower the barriers of entry for the ACP  
16 program, that would be a godsend for us in the  
17 territory.

18 MS. ELLIS: Sounds like more  
19 transparency and less information sharing would  
20 be helpful, or intrusiveness into personal  
21 information.

22 MR. ADAMS: Yeah, absolutely. If

1       there's one thing that I'm hearing constantly  
2       about that program, it's that they're like, I  
3       don't want to tell the feds, they know too much  
4       about me already. I don't want to--I just want  
5       the internet. People, it's interesting, they'll  
6       say I'd rather forego the internet than give up  
7       personal data.

8                   MS. ELLIS: That's amazing.

9                   MR. ADAMS: I hear that a lot.

10                  MS. ELLIS: Yeah, well, thank you for  
11       pointing that out. Hal, what would help you?

12                  MR. WOODS: So I think a couple of  
13       things. One is that--and I think Stephan made  
14       some incredible points there just about the  
15       barriers for ACP. We with Chicago Connected, we  
16       made it just name and address pretty much,  
17       because public schools had essentially  
18       prequalified every single family. They got an  
19       activation code, so they just called and gave  
20       the code. We skipped that verification process.  
21       CPS handled that directly, and they've already  
22       got family's information, so I think that's a

1 great idea.

2 I would say for us, Chicago  
3 Connected was a foundation that the City of  
4 Chicago has now built off of to, first of all,  
5 a community listening process, but to  
6 ultimately develop a digital equity plan. So  
7 the city is putting about \$28 million towards  
8 that effort. But I think the federal  
9 government, both directly and also through  
10 obviously to the contributions to state  
11 government, those funding commitments are  
12 really important.

13 The timelines that have been shared  
14 have been really important. So organizations  
15 that need those funds to sustain these efforts,  
16 we've got community organizations who have now  
17 added digital equity to some of the core work  
18 that they're doing now. They've seen the  
19 benefit of how having connected households  
20 benefits the ability for them to deliver other  
21 services to households, more efficient  
22 services. They don't have to come and take two

1 buses and a train to come down to a physical  
2 location to get help with immigration services,  
3 help with housing assistance, etc.

4 They can actually reach those  
5 families remotely. They can serve more families  
6 that way. So I think my worry is that if there  
7 are delays or if we have issues with  
8 appropriations to get that money out to  
9 localities and to state governments that  
10 community organizations who rely, they don't  
11 get a lot of general operating dollars  
12 typically. They work grant to grant in many  
13 respects.

14 So if we lose the staff because  
15 there's a gap in funding, essentially, that the  
16 city can't make up for, then we lose the boots  
17 on the ground, the people that have been  
18 trained for three years to do this programming.  
19 Then we might lose momentum across the city in  
20 terms of being able to do digital divide  
21 issues, as well.

22 I would also just acknowledge that

1 our private sector partners, I think  
2 specifically our internet service providers,  
3 they could also help bridge that gap by  
4 committing resources to organizations to help,  
5 whether it's outreach, whether it's ACP  
6 outreach, whether it's also providing support  
7 so folks can actually hire and have staff to do  
8 digital learning trainings, and then of course,  
9 devices, as well.

10 If there's a way to also retire old  
11 devices that those ISPs that the broader  
12 business community has access to, work with  
13 local refurbishment partners, get those out to  
14 community organizations to get them out to the  
15 community, that those are also roles that they  
16 can play, as well.

17 MS. ELLIS: That's great. I love  
18 that. Thank you. Thomas?

19 MR. KAMBER: Well, first and  
20 foremost, make sure that older adults are  
21 included. It's just such an important--I have  
22 to advocate for the group that we work with,

1 but it's really important not just to make sure  
2 that older people get supported with these  
3 programs, but make sure you cast a wide net. No  
4 group or no demographic that's having a hard  
5 time with technology should be left out of  
6 these initiatives. They need to be  
7 comprehensive. They need to be inclusive, and  
8 it's really important to make sure you cover  
9 all those bases.

10           There have been programs in the past  
11 that didn't reach everybody, and we want to  
12 make sure that that is something that we don't  
13 repeat. Then secondly, I think there's a real  
14 need to invest in partnerships out here and  
15 invest in the capacity on the large scale of  
16 organizations that can do this work at scale,  
17 the everyone-ones. In older adults services,  
18 there are networks and housing organizations  
19 like National Church Residences that are out  
20 there that cover multiple states.

21           There are AAA-associated  
22 organizations that work with large numbers of

1 local agencies in Philadelphia and elsewhere.  
2 So investing in the larger organizations that  
3 have capacity to reach tens of thousands of  
4 people will help us with that scale. But at the  
5 same time there's two other things that we need  
6 to consider. One is how do we activate  
7 innovation at the grassroots level? We work  
8 with groups all around the country and we  
9 survey them around what they need. What we're  
10 finding is there are a lot of locations around  
11 the country that have great ideas and great  
12 programming, but you know what they don't have?  
13 They don't have a laptop cart.

14 For \$5,000, this organization could  
15 be just knocking them out of the park every  
16 day, but they don't have that investment at the  
17 grassroots level to activate the already-  
18 exciting opportunities they've got. They know  
19 their constituencies, they know the programs,  
20 but they don't have the investment. So we have  
21 to make sure that there's large-scale  
22 investment in agencies that can reach large

1 numbers of folks, but also ways to reach those  
2 people in the communities and make that happen.

3 The last thing is, we need  
4 sustainability over time with these programs. I  
5 remember because I worked many, many years ago  
6 on the TOP program from the Department of  
7 Commerce around 1994 or something like that.  
8 Some of you may recall that on this call. Then  
9 I worked on BTOP. They added the B, so it  
10 became Broadband Technology Opportunities after  
11 they had started with Technology Opportunities.  
12 That was another huge opportunity for us, but  
13 that was like 15 years later, and 10 years in  
14 the past now, and now we have another federal  
15 infusion.

16 But every single state, every single  
17 community and the federal government needs to  
18 be asking how do we make sure that these  
19 programs are designed so that they sustain into  
20 the future and don't end or go off a cliff in  
21 two or three years. After we built all these  
22 resources and all this momentum, how do we make

1       sure that this stuff works? That goes to the  
2       private sector, as well. I've talked to some of  
3       the telecoms companies. They say we're building  
4       networks, but the networks cost money to  
5       manage, to maintain.

6                 How do we make sure those funding  
7       resources through the market or through  
8       government or some hybrid, are able to keep us  
9       going into the future. I'm not sure I've heard  
10      that plan yet.

11                MS. ELLIS: That's great. Well, that  
12      leads me over to Anisa, because I think from  
13      your perspective it would be really interesting  
14      to hear what can the government help you with?  
15      You're the only corporate perspective on this  
16      panel, or the community organizations, civil  
17      society. What is it when you're doing this  
18      work, when you're putting these programs  
19      together, that would be really helpful to build  
20      them to be better, stronger and sustainable?  
21      Then I'll come to you, Norma.

22                MS. GREEN: Thank you for that. So I

1       guess it's interesting because we are regulated  
2       by the FCC to offer our services. Of course ACP  
3       is extremely important. We would love to see  
4       the program continue beyond the forecasted end  
5       of program that many of us have been hearing  
6       rumors around. So we think that it is a  
7       critical piece of the digital divide pie.

8                 We also are participating actively  
9       in advocacy around the BEAD program and the  
10       digital equity plans that NTIA is standing up--  
11       I'm sorry, state programs that NTIA has funding  
12       to provide to those states. So we're watching  
13       that. We are hopeful that there's going to be  
14       some collaboration and a comprehensive state  
15       broadband adoption plan that could dramatically  
16       increase the number of households participating  
17       in the opportunities that are available with  
18       broadband connectivity.

19                We do think that there are some best  
20       practices that would be helpful in that  
21       engagement and collaboration, especially around  
22       public and non-profit and private sector

1 organizations so that we're incorporating  
2 different skill sets and experiences into  
3 solutioning. As I mentioned, there's no one-  
4 size-fits-all solution to this, so we think  
5 that a more collaborative approach will be  
6 successful.

7 I think it's going to show up in the  
8 results. We have done quite a bit over the last  
9 three years to try to again, meet the  
10 communities that we serve and meet their needs.  
11 I think going forward it's going to be  
12 extremely pivotal to ensure that we are  
13 continuing to engage and collaborate with those  
14 that may have their ear to the ground a little  
15 more closer than us and, of course, ensure that  
16 the federal entities that can contribute and  
17 support funding do so in a way that makes the  
18 most sense.

19 MS. ELLIS: Thank you. Norma?

20 MS. FERNANDEZ: Thank you. I want to  
21 definitely thumbs up to Hal and Thomas  
22 regarding raising the--making sure

1 organizations have sufficient funding over time  
2 to support programs. I think it also begs the  
3 consideration how do we define scale? I know we  
4 think of scale in terms of thousands of people,  
5 and certainly this is an urgent issue. We want  
6 to make sure folks are connected, they have the  
7 skill set so they can start really harnessing  
8 the power of internet today.

9 That being said, when we think about  
10 meaningful adoption, broadband adoption, it's  
11 really important to think about what that  
12 means. It takes time and it takes people to  
13 really ensure we're getting the word out,  
14 people getting devices and training. So  
15 meaningful adoption takes sufficient funding to  
16 ensure that folks are getting the tools that  
17 they need.

18 So I just want us to think about  
19 that, too, and that's across the board. We hear  
20 it from government, from the philanthropic  
21 sector, from private sector, non-profit sector,  
22 too. We want to reach thousands of people.

1 That's our global goal, absolutely, but let's  
2 really think about what that is in a meaningful  
3 way and a way that has significant impact in  
4 communities.

5 MS. ELLIS: Thank you for that.  
6 That's a great way to finish up that question.  
7 We have 12 minutes left. We're on our last  
8 question, which is a pretty rich question. I  
9 think everybody is going to have some thoughts  
10 on this. We'll just start--I'll actually start  
11 with Ji Soo on this one, but I'll read the  
12 question first. Looking back to inform how we  
13 might look forward, what opportunities exist to  
14 address these adoption and digital readiness  
15 challenges at scale. Like we're saying what is  
16 scale?

17 For example, the Infrastructure  
18 Investment in Jobs Act implemented the Digital  
19 Equity Act, providing for the first time  
20 federal subsidies specifically targeted at  
21 providing funding for digital skilling and  
22 readiness program. Do you believe that funding

1 for digital skilling is relevant, and if so,  
2 how do you maximize allocation of funding for  
3 what is arguably a small fraction of existing  
4 federal dollars in this space.

5 So that was a lot of question. I'll  
6 come to you first, Ji Soo, and I can repeat  
7 parts of this, too. Just give me a nod and I'm  
8 happy to do that.

9 MR. SONG: Yeah, I'll try to answer  
10 the full question in parts so that my response  
11 is clear. Knowing that this is the last  
12 question in the lineup, first thank you to all  
13 of the other panelists. I learned so much from  
14 all the programs that you all are implementing,  
15 about the settings that they work in, and what  
16 work it will take for us to really continue our  
17 acceleration towards digital equity.

18 So going back to Sarah Kate's  
19 question, I really agree that we have an  
20 opportunity through the Bipartisan  
21 Infrastructure Law to address those adoption  
22 challenges at scale, including, as you

1 mentioned, by tackling the issue of digital  
2 literacy. That's not just coming from me.  
3 You'll find in our digital equity resource that  
4 our roundtable participants found sustainable  
5 investments in digital literacy results to be  
6 critical.

7 For a lot of different communities,  
8 it's not enough that we distribute the  
9 necessary physical tools. We also have to offer  
10 opportunities for learners and their families  
11 to develop those digital skills to leverage  
12 technology in meeting their everyday goals. But  
13 our roundtable participants also emphasized  
14 some of the other strategies that need to be  
15 considered in parallel to maximize the impact  
16 of those digital investments.

17 Providing those multilingual and  
18 multimodal technical supports, as well, perhaps  
19 through the recruitment of digital navigators  
20 from the community. Again, leveraging trusted  
21 community assets such as our education  
22 institutions who have facilitated information

1 exchange and resource distribution throughout  
2 the pandemic. And that also means that the  
3 staff and faculty in those institutions need  
4 adequate training and professional development  
5 on how to deliver effective digital skills,  
6 development opportunities.

7 And then also co-creating solutions  
8 in direct learning and feedback cycles. As  
9 adopting strategies that we've all discussed  
10 are implemented, it's important to ensure that  
11 learners and other community members have the  
12 opportunity to provide open feedback on what's  
13 working and requires scaling and what's not  
14 working and requires adjustments.

15 Here I actually want to shout-out  
16 two examples directly from our digital equity  
17 guidance resource. Roselle Public Schools in  
18 New Jersey, they paid really deliberate  
19 attention to the training and professional  
20 development that educators need to leverage the  
21 newly-invested technology in support of  
22 learning.

1 I'm going to butcher this name a  
2 little bit, but Quinsigamond Community College  
3 in Massachusetts, they've been able to connect  
4 students to advisors who are helping them build  
5 digital literacy skills that are critical for  
6 success. We're currently continuing to develop  
7 these additional stories of impact in order to  
8 illustrate the practices that we're calling  
9 for. You all can find that on [tech.gov/stories](https://tech.gov/stories).  
10 We'll continue to post throughout 2023.

11 And then to your other question  
12 about maximizing the impact of the current  
13 funding opportunities, OET has been encouraging  
14 the education sector and the broadband sector  
15 to collaborate with one another as the digital  
16 equity planning processes are underway at the  
17 state level. Given their experiences in  
18 navigating the pandemic, developing those  
19 trusted relationships in communities, and  
20 building digital skills on an everyday basis,  
21 we really think that the education sector has a  
22 lot to offer because they've been champions of

1 digital equity for a long time.

2 So education leaders can serve as  
3 that critical asset in the ongoing planning  
4 efforts, helping ensure that the learners have  
5 the opportunity and can benefit from  
6 investments. Several states have also begun  
7 announcing opportunities where local education  
8 leaders can contribute to the funding efforts.  
9 So we're trying to support those states by  
10 getting the word out about those public  
11 sessions, town hall meetings, community  
12 engagement opportunities, with the national  
13 organizations that have members and affiliates  
14 in those states.

15 And then one last thing, we can also  
16 think about creating different types of  
17 programs that have shared objectives. The  
18 Office of Ed Tech, we recently revised our  
19 office's official Dear Colleague Letter with  
20 the goal to accomplish two things. First,  
21 provide information on some of the core  
22 consideration areas when we're trying to

1 maximize the ROI on education technology and  
2 qualify which sources of funds that are  
3 overseen by the Department of Education, like  
4 from the Every Student Succeeds Act and IDEA,  
5 can support each eligible use, including  
6 digital equity and inclusion.

7 So how can this Dear Colleague  
8 Letter serve as a tool in helping identify  
9 those shared goals between the education sector  
10 and the broadband sector so that funds and  
11 resources can be braided towards these  
12 sustainable solutions. So we hope that this can  
13 serve as another tool in promoting  
14 collaboration that leads to the strategic use  
15 of funds and maximizing our collective impact.

16 MS. ELLIS: Thank you, wow. Okay,  
17 great. That's great. Norma? Two questions,  
18 scaling opportunities, what are the scaling--  
19 which you kind of touched on already, I think.  
20 And then how do we maximize the impact of this  
21 funding?

22 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yeah, I think we

1 can't over-emphasize the importance of  
2 strategic partnerships. Thomas mentioned this  
3 earlier. Really looking at how various  
4 communities are coming together to maximize the  
5 funding. So I think it's imperative to have  
6 government at the table, philanthropy at the  
7 table, private sector, including ISPs at the  
8 table, as well as community-based  
9 organizations.

10 You look at different models across  
11 the country and those that are effective so far  
12 have got together those various groups and are  
13 creating digital equity plans, are making sure  
14 that the voices of diverse communities are  
15 being included, are putting plans together to  
16 secure funding. So I think that's imperative  
17 for purposes of having impact and also being  
18 able to scale.

19 When it comes to scaling, too, we  
20 can't over-emphasize as well, the train-the-  
21 trainer model. Again, looking at universities  
22 in particular. In fact, we did a project with

1 the University of Memphis, their School of  
2 Social Work. We trained their social work  
3 students on ACP and other digital literacy  
4 resources, and then they went out as part of  
5 their capstone project into the community to  
6 talk about what's available for folks. So  
7 looking at those kinds of models that are  
8 certainly successful to replicate across the  
9 country.

10 MS. ELLIS: That's great. Hal?

11 MR. WOODS: I'll say a couple of  
12 things. One is that I would say federal funding  
13 cannot get this done alone. So I would  
14 encourage folks that are in this space to think  
15 about advocacy at the local level, at the state  
16 level, whether that's using infrastructure  
17 dollars, whether that's using local dollars, as  
18 well. So I think that's an important  
19 consideration.

20 I would also just acknowledge  
21 continuing to do advocacy with the local  
22 business communities, philanthropic

1 communities, as well. I think one of the  
2 benefits, again, I kind of touched on this  
3 earlier, where a community organization saw how  
4 having connected households that they're  
5 serving really brings benefit to them. I think  
6 philanthropy in the city and the corporate  
7 social responsibility folks, as well, have seen  
8 that some of their philanthropic endeavors,  
9 social justice endeavors are much more  
10 supported through having connected households.

11 So thinking about building that  
12 broad coalition, thinking about local state  
13 funding in addition to making the case for why  
14 digital equity work is so important. It was  
15 interesting to hear the notion that folks in  
16 the US Virgin Islands are saying they'd rather  
17 go without connectivity than have to share  
18 personal information.

19 We've heard that, particularly from  
20 our non-citizens here in Chicago. But I do  
21 think many families and others have seen that  
22 connectivity is almost as basic and

1       foundational as water, as utilities. I think  
2       being able to make the case to the business  
3       community, the philanthropic community, as  
4       well, is important to have that broad and  
5       diverse coalition to ensure that there's enough  
6       local funding and state funding to match what  
7       we can receive through federal funding, as  
8       well.

9                   MS. ELLIS: Thank you. And I'm going  
10       to give the last word on this to Thomas. No  
11       pressure.

12                   MR. KAMBER: That's a little bit of,  
13       a little stressful here. I'm just going to add  
14       one thing because people have covered a lot of  
15       this, but I will say accountability is one of  
16       the big factors in sustaining and engendering  
17       more investment into digital inclusion and  
18       digital training programs over time.

19                   We've learned a lot from the  
20       corporate partners we've worked with and AARP  
21       and other groups that are focusing on outcomes  
22       that if we can show the results of what we're

1 doing, not just in terms of how many people are  
2 using the technology, but what they're doing  
3 with the technology. Are they getting a job?  
4 Are they helping their kids graduate from high  
5 school? Are they integrating into society as a  
6 new immigrant or person coming out of  
7 incarceration?

8 As an older person, are they  
9 rebuilding their social network, improving  
10 their health measure and things like that. When  
11 we can make the case for the results, the  
12 outcomes that emerge from this work, then we  
13 can spark that ongoing investment. It becomes  
14 more sustainable. It also increases our  
15 partnership potential with other groups that  
16 may be focused on those outcomes, not simply on  
17 the technology part of it, but really the  
18 social impact and social value. I think that's  
19 the place to emphasize.

20 MS. ELLIS: Excellent. Thank you.  
21 Well, we've come in just on time. I just want  
22 to say that what we heard a lot about today was

1 scale, very much about strategic partnerships,  
2 advocacy, leadership matters, information and  
3 making sure that we can gather the information  
4 and that the information is shared.

5 Thank you all to this esteemed  
6 panel. We really appreciate your time. Thank  
7 you for your service today. This is information  
8 that we're going to take back now, share along  
9 with use to help us build where we go next as a  
10 council. So thank you very much. I'm going to  
11 now turn this over to Dr. Harrison, who is  
12 going to give us our closing remarks.

13 DR. HARRISON: Hi there. Thank you so  
14 much, Sarah Kate, and thank you to everyone  
15 who's listening in to this conversation. I'm  
16 Dr. Dominique Harrison, and I'm the Working  
17 Group Chair for the DEI Working Group. Today  
18 our conversation highlighted that COVID-19  
19 pandemic exposed the challenges Americans from  
20 unserved and underserved communities face in  
21 accessing high-speed internet access to meet  
22 their basic needs, from working at home,

1 participating in distance learning, or taking  
2 part in many other important activities for  
3 which internet access is crucial.

4 The conversation also underscored  
5 the need to deliver high-speed quality  
6 broadband connectivity across the US and its  
7 territories. And we rounded out our  
8 conversation by uncovering specific lessons  
9 from our esteemed panelists on the  
10 availability, affordability, and adoption of  
11 broadband services for diverse communities.

12 There are five nuggets I took away  
13 from this convo. One, we need to progress  
14 beyond gap solutions. Two, we need to meet  
15 people where they are. Three, we need to  
16 partner with trusted community partners. Four,  
17 we need to scale what's been done. And five, we  
18 need to invest in what works.

19 Thank you to our moderators, who  
20 also serve as workstream leads of this work,  
21 Clayton Banks and Sarah Kate Ellis. This  
22 includes Vickie Robinson, who did not, who did

1 a lot of the back scene work. I also want to  
2 thank our CEDC Chairs, Susan Allen, Dr. Nicol  
3 Turner Lee, and Heather Gates. And a special  
4 thank you to all our panelists that have  
5 participated in this discussion today.

6           Sharing your perspectives helps  
7 advance our collective goal in implementing  
8 solutions to help close the digital divide. And  
9 we need to continue to make more spaces like  
10 this to hear from leaders like you. Thank you  
11 so much, and I'll turn it over to Jamila.

12           MS. JOHNSON: Thank you so much, Dr.  
13 Harrison, and thank you for your leadership of  
14 the Digital Empowerment and Inclusion Working  
15 Group. Today's roundtable represents just a  
16 portion of the work that this working group has  
17 been engaged in during the charter. So we thank  
18 you for your leadership.

19           Thank you also to the tireless  
20 leadership of the co-leads for Workstream 3,  
21 which brought you today's roundtable. Clayton  
22 Banks, Selecon Harlem, Vickie Robison of

1 Microsoft, and Sarah Kate Ellis of GLAAD. You  
2 each had a goal and an objective for today's  
3 convening, and your roundtable nailed it. Thank  
4 you for leading the charge.

5 Thank you to each and every member  
6 of Workstream 3, who debated these issues, who  
7 drafted the questions, and who identified the  
8 right people to hear from today. Thank you.

9 Anisa Green of AT&T; Louis Peraetz, Wireless  
10 Internet Service Providers Association;  
11 Broderick Johnson and his alternate  
12 representative, Antonio Williams of Comcast;  
13 Rebecca Gibbons, City of Portland; and Michele  
14 Cober of Verizon.

15 Thank you also to our Chair of the  
16 Communications Equity & Diversity Council, Ms.  
17 Heather Gate of Connected Nation. Your  
18 leadership on this event is greatly, greatly  
19 appreciated, and we understand how very busy  
20 you are, so thank you, Heather. My personal  
21 appreciation and thanks go to my colleagues on  
22 the FCC's council staff.

1            Ashley Tyson of the Wireline  
2            Competition Bureau--and by the way, Ashley has  
3            just recently joined the FCC's team on the  
4            council, and she has not missed a beat. She  
5            rolled up her sleeves and she got right to  
6            work. What an impressive young lady. Thank you,  
7            Ashley. Thank you so much. Diana Coho, Consumer  
8            & Governmental Affairs Bureau, who wears so  
9            many hats for us. Thank you, Diana.

10            And lastly to our colleague, Aurelie  
11            Mathieu of the Wireline Competition Bureau, who  
12            did the great early work on today's roundtable.  
13            Thank you. Thank you, Aurelie. We also want to  
14            thank our dedicated tech team at the FCC,  
15            without whom we could do none of this. They  
16            have guided us so excellently, whether it be  
17            virtual or hybrid events for the council.

18            We extend our gratitude to Jeff  
19            Riordan, Steve Balderson, and Greg Hall. My  
20            personal thanks go to my boss, Holly Saurer,  
21            Chief of the Media Bureau, and her management  
22            team, Hillary DeNigro and Radhika Karmarkar,

1 for their support. In closing let me say that  
2 today's roundtable on Lessons Learned During  
3 the Pandemic marks the final workshop event of  
4 the Communications Equity & Diversity Council  
5 during its current charter.

6 We have been pleased to offer four  
7 such convenings in the past 18 months. We are  
8 very grateful to each of the stakeholders and  
9 experts who gave of their time and knowledge to  
10 increase our learnings around broadband access,  
11 affordability and deployment, media ownership  
12 diversity, digital upscaling, and the future of  
13 work.

14 Thank you to all for making the CEDC  
15 public programs a great success. If you missed  
16 any portion of today's roundtable, there will  
17 be a recording of the roundtable available  
18 online at the CEDC's web page. Please visit  
19 [www.fcc.gov/communications-equity-and-diversity](http://www.fcc.gov/communications-equity-and-diversity)  
20 -council. Please visit our web page and stay  
21 engaged with us on these critical issues.

22 Thank you and take care.

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17  
18  
19  
20  
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(Whereupon, the above-entitled  
matter went off the record at 1:06 p.m.)

A			
<b>\$1</b> 63:13 109:2	<b>access</b> 1:8 4:10 5:21	<b>activation</b> 149:19	<b>advisement</b> 82:2
<b>\$1.4</b> 70:14	6:5 7:18 8:17 9:16,19	<b>active</b> 64:9,11 112:5	<b>Advisor</b> 2:14 20:19
<b>\$10</b> 13:5 104:16	11:14,17 13:19 14:15	140:11	95:5
<b>\$100</b> 12:10	20:17 22:12,19 30:15	<b>actively</b> 157:8	<b>advisors</b> 2:2 23:19
<b>\$14.2</b> 13:20	30:16 31:2,4 32:1	<b>activities</b> 10:21 173:2	164:4
<b>\$150</b> 11:9	34:9,21 36:10,20	<b>activity</b> 46:18	<b>advisory</b> 5:17 23:20
<b>\$2</b> 11:6 103:17	39:20 40:2,5 41:10,20	<b>actual</b> 25:22	<b>advocacy</b> 20:5 98:12
<b>\$2.75</b> 14:1	42:1 49:4 53:10,15,22	<b>Adams</b> 2:8 95:21 96:1,2	100:18 157:9 168:15
<b>\$20</b> 72:5	54:10 69:14 73:12	109:11 111:17 127:15	168:21 172:2
<b>\$28</b> 150:7	89:2 95:12 103:3,19	127:17 133:9,13	<b>advocate</b> 152:22
<b>\$3</b> 108:14	104:1,9 108:6 111:5	141:11,18 145:19,22	<b>Advocates</b> 2:4 19:19
<b>\$30</b> 61:3 103:21	113:8,18 122:14	146:3,6 147:8 148:22	<b>Affairs</b> 2:12 176:8
<b>\$40</b> 118:7	123:10 124:1,22	149:9	<b>affect</b> 142:4
<b>\$42.45</b> 13:18	126:12 128:6 144:14	<b>adaptability</b> 17:20	<b>affiliate</b> 108:5
<b>\$5</b> 70:16	144:19 152:12 172:21	<b>add</b> 26:6 29:5 130:16	<b>affiliates</b> 20:2 165:13
<b>\$5,000</b> 154:14	173:3 177:10	137:2 141:7 170:13	<b>affiliation</b> 108:2
<b>\$50</b> 12:7 118:7	<b>accessibility</b> 26:10,16	<b>added</b> 150:17 155:9	<b>affordability</b> 1:8 3:5
<b>\$6.4</b> 70:17	29:15 32:9 33:3,7,8	<b>addition</b> 34:3 102:15	4:10 5:2 7:18 15:11
<b>\$65</b> 13:17 113:5	<b>accessible</b> 5:5 30:18	119:20 169:13	16:18 18:6 25:21
<b>\$7</b> 11:21 13:6	32:14	<b>additional</b> 29:4 104:3,5	26:10,15 27:11 28:15
<b>\$75</b> 12:8	<b>accessing</b> 46:19	108:10 112:19 164:7	29:14,20,22 33:3
<b>\$9.95</b> 30:2	172:21	<b>Additionally</b> 12:21	65:21 94:21 99:2
<b>a.m.</b> 1:14 4:2 5:8 91:22	<b>accident</b> 145:21	<b>address</b> 5:11 9:9 11:10	103:3,15 173:10
92:1	<b>accomplish</b> 165:20	14:14 28:17 30:16	177:11
<b>AAA-associated</b>	<b>accomplished</b> 75:19	32:21 48:5,16 52:2	<b>affordable</b> 5:5 13:22
153:21	<b>account</b> 120:13	62:18 66:18 85:7	21:16 48:10 49:19
<b>AAANPIs</b> 20:6	<b>accountability</b> 170:15	86:17 103:5 128:22	50:2 63:6 66:3 97:8
<b>AANAPI</b> 19:21	<b>accounts</b> 58:18	149:16 160:14 161:21	108:19 111:9 114:15
<b>AANHPI</b> 34:20 35:3	<b>accurate</b> 144:15	<b>addressing</b> 14:9 29:7	126:9 143:16 144:7
52:15 74:7	<b>achieve</b> 50:1 72:12	55:18 90:5	144:20
<b>AAPI</b> 34:4 53:10 54:20	81:11	<b>adequate</b> 9:16 163:4	<b>affording</b> 126:8
<b>AARP</b> 93:22 108:3,6,6	<b>achieving</b> 72:10	<b>adjust</b> 31:12	<b>aftermath</b> 111:15 129:3
123:17 130:3,3,8	<b>acknowledge</b> 25:12	<b>adjustments</b> 163:14	<b>afternoon</b> 94:19
140:7 148:2 170:20	81:15 151:22 168:20	<b>Administration</b> 85:17	<b>aged</b> 9:15
<b>AARP's</b> 123:19	<b>acknowledged</b> 86:3	<b>ado</b> 16:13	<b>agencies</b> 4:15,16 27:17
<b>ability</b> 150:20	<b>acknowledging</b> 36:7	<b>adopting</b> 10:9 163:9	37:20 62:3 88:3 95:9
<b>able</b> 32:1 41:17 51:17	<b>ACP</b> 27:15,22 28:21	<b>adoption</b> 3:6 5:9,11	98:5 116:3 128:12,15
59:9 61:3 62:17 68:7	33:15 37:22 48:9 52:7	14:14 18:21 26:10,15	138:22 140:19 143:12
71:16 85:7 90:4,8,13	52:12 53:1,4,5 55:8	28:15 29:14 30:6	154:1,22
98:19 99:15 102:2	55:13 56:1 57:11,13	32:11 33:3,7,8 52:8	<b>agency</b> 22:15 110:18
107:17 111:13 114:6	57:16,21 60:4 61:2	57:11,16 58:6 91:19	113:1 129:8
119:12,15 120:4,14	72:17 74:15 81:2 85:9	92:5 96:19 97:7 100:8	<b>agenda</b> 3:1 7:22 16:7
121:10,14 122:15	85:14,18 89:4,11 99:3	101:1 103:3 104:5	<b>aggregate</b> 139:14 142:1
124:11,14 128:17,21	99:7 103:16,22,22	105:4 114:12 115:3	<b>aggregated</b> 53:18
129:21 131:11 132:4	130:7 131:5,12	115:14 157:15 159:10	<b>aging</b> 45:4 69:7 108:15
132:20 136:12,14,18	144:12 147:9,12,16	159:10,15 160:14	138:22
137:2,4 144:14	148:15 149:15 152:5	161:21 173:10	<b>ago</b> 22:14 83:22 100:11
147:20 151:20 156:8	157:2 168:3	<b>adult</b> 126:12	100:12 103:7 155:5
164:3 167:18 170:2	<b>ACPs</b> 79:8	<b>adults</b> 2:13 45:5,7	<b>agree</b> 60:3 61:5 62:1
<b>above-entitled</b> 91:21	<b>acronyms</b> 92:17 108:17	46:12 93:21 94:2	139:14 161:19
178:1	<b>act</b> 11:7,20 12:22 13:4	102:12 107:2 126:7	<b>agreed</b> 8:5
<b>absolutely</b> 33:5 50:7	13:16 14:2 70:1	135:11 152:20 153:17	<b>agreement</b> 67:7
51:17 87:4 142:17	112:19 160:18,19	<b>advance</b> 7:17 18:9 20:5	<b>agreements</b> 108:9
148:22 160:1	166:4	43:4 83:9,15 146:21	<b>agrees</b> 66:16
<b>accelerate</b> 10:20	<b>acting</b> 74:5	174:7	<b>ahead</b> 23:10 48:15
<b>accelerating</b> 112:8	<b>action</b> 40:15 145:17	<b>advancing</b> 5:20 7:11	84:13 127:17
<b>acceleration</b> 161:17	<b>actionable</b> 8:12	8:16 79:1	<b>aid</b> 11:6 133:20,21
	<b>activate</b> 154:6,17	<b>advantage</b> 37:22	<b>aiming</b> 116:21

**all-star** 94:7  
**Allen** 174:2  
**allocation** 161:2  
**allow** 8:10 67:8 88:9  
**allowed** 28:17 49:15  
 85:19 99:22 120:6  
**allowing** 7:12 23:11  
**alternate** 175:11  
**alum** 58:10  
**amazing** 39:3 42:22  
 77:18 92:7 100:3  
 149:8  
**Amazingly** 10:16  
**ambassadors** 119:20  
**America** 1:1 15:14  
 51:11 147:5  
**American** 2:4 13:4  
 19:19,20 54:19 74:6  
 103:9 129:11,15  
**Americans** 9:18 53:14  
 86:15 172:19  
**amount** 110:4  
**anchor** 51:5 56:3 65:5  
 118:10  
**Android** 107:9  
**Angeles** 97:3 99:5  
 104:13 131:2  
**Anisa** 2:10 94:18,20  
 102:19 105:16 145:6  
 156:12 175:9  
**Annette** 2:5 19:10 21:3  
 22:2 26:17 56:20 60:1  
 62:9 66:17 88:20  
 89:13  
**announced** 109:2  
**announcements** 40:6  
**announcing** 93:4 165:7  
**answer** 32:21 48:22  
 119:12 161:9  
**answers** 47:16  
**Antonio** 175:12  
**anybody** 40:8 49:1  
 127:13  
**API** 54:17  
**app** 34:16  
**Appalachia** 41:8  
**application** 148:2  
**apply** 18:1 54:12 139:3  
**applying** 66:9  
**appreciate** 21:7 38:21  
 62:8 66:14 147:9  
 172:6  
**appreciated** 175:19  
**appreciation** 175:21  
**appreciative** 19:6  
**approach** 31:4 114:18  
 145:14 158:5  
**approaches** 112:6,9

125:3  
**appropriate** 68:14 90:5  
 90:6  
**Appropriated** 12:22  
**appropriations** 11:20  
 151:8  
**apps** 34:14  
**April** 23:5  
**area** 41:9 42:8 97:3  
 124:21 138:22  
**areas** 36:3 38:19 50:18  
 50:19,19,20 51:12  
 69:17 87:7 109:4  
 124:12 125:7 126:2  
 126:21,22 138:17  
 141:4 165:22  
**arguably** 161:3  
**ARPA** 13:4 62:5  
**Ashley** 7:4 11:3 176:1,2  
 176:7  
**Asian** 2:4 19:19,20  
 33:13 34:2 53:14,19  
 54:19 74:5  
**aside** 89:7  
**asked** 37:8 47:16 60:22  
 107:2,2 113:2 117:12  
 119:1  
**asking** 19:1 52:14 53:2  
 56:3 81:20 155:18  
**ASL** 30:21  
**aspect** 64:18  
**aspects** 79:19  
**asset** 165:3  
**assets** 145:3 162:21  
**assistance** 64:7 89:10  
 145:5 151:3  
**Association** 104:22  
 125:11 144:3,4  
 175:10  
**associations** 15:3  
**assume** 59:5 66:15  
 92:19  
**AT&T** 2:12 33:19 94:20  
 103:20 108:12 140:10  
 175:9  
**Atlantic** 109:17  
**attached** 88:1  
**attempting** 103:5  
 115:20  
**attend** 69:3  
**attended** 99:6  
**attention** 96:15 99:1  
 114:12 163:19  
**attract** 132:4  
**audiences** 117:21  
**Aurelie** 176:10,13  
**author** 42:15  
**Authority** 2:7 22:10

45:3,4 46:2 49:12  
 107:1 131:1  
**automated** 46:1  
**automatically** 79:14  
**availability** 3:5 5:2  
 16:18 18:6 25:20 26:9  
 26:15 29:14,16,19  
 33:2 173:10  
**available** 52:18 85:1  
 106:6 114:14 129:16  
 139:12 140:15 157:17  
 168:6 177:17  
**aware** 52:9 55:13 60:9  
 86:12  
**awareness** 32:2,11  
 56:1 58:6 73:3 85:14  
 86:12,19 97:6  
**awesome** 35:11

---

**B**

---

**B** 155:9  
**back** 20:13 30:12 43:20  
 48:1,1,4 54:3 59:21  
 61:18 63:17 75:21  
 77:14 78:8 82:13  
 91:18 114:6 128:10  
 139:14 142:20 160:12  
 161:18 172:8 174:1  
**background** 112:2  
 143:1  
**backgrounds** 132:2,13  
**Balderson** 176:19  
**Ballmer** 117:4  
**banks** 1:20 16:10,10,15  
 16:20 17:10 20:7 21:3  
 21:21 23:12 24:15  
 25:9 28:1 31:6 32:19  
 35:11 38:12 43:14  
 47:13 50:4 51:20  
 54:15,21 55:2 56:14  
 56:18,22 59:20 62:7  
 66:13 70:2 71:3,10  
 73:15 75:5 77:17  
 78:20 79:13 81:14  
 82:4,11,15 84:11 87:1  
 88:17 89:12 90:17  
 173:21 174:22  
**Barrett** 123:8  
**barriers** 14:14 113:20  
 113:22 148:15 149:15  
**base** 109:20  
**based** 32:14 65:9 67:14  
 101:16 136:4 145:3  
**bases** 153:9  
**basic** 59:17 105:3  
 120:11 169:22 172:22  
**basically** 73:22 80:22  
**basis** 6:2 8:20 164:20

**Bay** 97:3  
**Beacon** 23:22  
**BEAD** 13:19 76:6  
 111:10 157:9  
**beat** 137:20 142:19  
 176:4  
**began** 10:17 106:3  
**beginning** 27:8 86:5  
 116:1 118:22  
**begs** 159:2  
**begun** 165:6  
**behold** 77:16  
**believe** 27:19 48:8  
 82:18 91:1 160:22  
**benefit** 12:4 13:21 15:9  
 27:14 48:9,10 70:10  
 103:14 108:16 117:13  
 121:17 131:4 150:19  
 165:5 169:5  
**benefits** 49:3 54:13  
 144:21 150:20 169:2  
**Benton** 55:6  
**Bess** 1:14,17 4:4 83:1  
**best** 10:15 87:18 89:18  
 90:8,13 116:16,17  
 142:9 146:17 147:10  
 157:19  
**better** 38:3,6 76:10  
 156:20  
**beyond** 53:8 78:18 86:4  
 116:5 142:10 157:4  
 173:14  
**Biden** 13:15  
**big** 40:3 50:8 59:3  
 73:19 90:20 119:10  
 125:18 127:2 136:22  
 170:16  
**bigger** 69:16 140:6  
**biggest** 69:4 100:20  
 125:20,22 136:17  
**bilingual** 120:10  
**bill** 112:21  
**billion** 11:9,21 13:5,6  
 13:17,18,20 14:1  
 63:14 72:5,11 81:21  
 82:2 103:17  
**billions** 57:8 84:22  
**Bipartisan** 112:16  
 161:20  
**birthday** 58:21  
**bit** 6:12 11:1 30:17 44:4  
 59:22 86:10 111:22  
 112:2 121:20 122:11  
 123:18 137:21 141:8  
 158:8 164:2 170:12  
**black** 12:15 42:18 122:2  
**blessing** 8:1  
**board** 23:22 44:5

159:19  
**Bob** 37:2  
**bodies** 143:9 145:3  
**bolstered** 145:10  
**book** 42:15  
**boosting** 55:20  
**boots** 151:16  
**border** 125:12 142:11  
 142:12  
**borders** 142:10,11  
**boss** 176:20  
**Boulevard** 40:13  
**braided** 166:11  
**break** 5:7 91:17  
**Breitbart** 1:21 19:10  
 20:9,14 44:6 48:21  
 63:4 79:22  
**bridge** 84:4 109:4  
 118:21 152:3  
**bridging** 74:19  
**brief** 91:17  
**briefly** 117:1  
**bring** 25:2 41:7 56:22  
 79:6,7,7 87:18 125:13  
**bringing** 115:2  
**brings** 169:5  
**broad** 169:12 170:4  
**broadband** 1:8 2:1,6  
 4:10,16 5:5 7:17 8:7  
 9:19 11:18 12:2,4  
 13:18,21 14:4,14 15:9  
 15:20 18:5 20:17,19  
 20:20 22:9,11,17,19  
 23:19 24:10,11 26:9  
 26:14 27:9,14 28:12  
 29:13 32:17 33:2 36:6  
 36:10 37:7 48:9 63:14  
 64:2,3 70:15 71:20  
 73:12 89:2 95:12  
 96:19 100:8 101:1,8  
 103:3,10,12,14,21  
 104:1,5 105:3 108:16  
 113:5 115:13 117:13  
 123:9 124:1 131:4  
 134:2 155:10 157:15  
 157:18 159:10 164:14  
 166:10 173:6,11  
 177:10  
**broader** 152:11  
**broadly** 131:5,16  
**Broderick** 2:2 19:11  
 24:16,18 25:9 56:19  
 59:21 68:21 71:5  
 73:15,22 81:17 84:13  
 175:11  
**Broderick's** 54:3  
**Bronx** 39:10,14 40:16  
 40:17 78:6

**brother** 43:13  
**brought** 17:15 141:13  
 174:21  
**Brown** 122:2  
**BTOP** 155:9  
**budget** 27:12 79:12  
**budgets** 79:3  
**Buffalo** 80:16  
**build** 18:1 41:19,20  
 76:11,20,22 77:4  
 108:22 140:18 147:1  
 156:19 164:4 172:9  
**building** 24:9 30:13  
 73:16,16,17,17 75:2  
 84:5,7 97:22 98:10  
 128:10 156:3 164:20  
 169:11  
**built** 29:4 31:8 39:15  
 74:3 115:19 138:18  
 150:4 155:21  
**Bureau** 1:19 176:2,8,11  
 176:21  
**burned** 76:15  
**bus** 37:5  
**buses** 151:1  
**business** 34:5,12,14  
 67:12 152:12 168:22  
 170:2  
**businesses** 10:2 17:17  
 29:5 51:8  
**busses** 75:22  
**busy** 71:11 175:19  
**butcher** 164:1  
**button** 51:22  
**Byrum** 2:1 19:11 23:13  
 23:13 39:2 55:4 78:3  
 83:20

---

**C**


---

**calculated** 123:22  
 124:3  
**California** 35:4 123:12  
**call** 26:17 31:2 46:1,12  
 90:20 91:8 107:4  
 119:12 125:14 137:4  
 140:1 155:8  
**called** 12:4 13:19 24:3  
 45:4 46:10 58:13  
 108:14 123:19 138:15  
 149:19  
**calling** 119:17 164:8  
**calls** 58:19  
**Canada** 125:12  
**cap** 81:15  
**capabilities** 68:18  
**capability** 64:4,17  
**capacity** 12:14,19  
 24:22 43:10 63:17

64:6 68:8 79:7 84:6  
 97:22 98:6,10 138:13  
 140:7 153:15 154:3  
**capacity-building**  
 130:20  
**capital** 13:6  
**capstone** 168:5  
**care** 139:8,9 177:22  
**career** 22:13  
**carefully** 18:12  
**CARES** 11:7  
**Caribbean** 140:2 142:4  
 146:5  
**CARICOM** 140:1 141:13  
 142:1,2  
**Carolina** 2:5 21:11,22  
 26:21 27:18 60:8 61:8  
 62:4 67:12 70:14  
 104:13  
**carrier** 96:4  
**carrying** 113:7  
**cart** 154:13  
**case** 41:6 107:17  
 139:15 169:13 170:2  
 171:11  
**cases** 118:11 121:13  
**cast** 153:3  
**category** 23:7  
**CEDC** 1:15,19 2:16 8:14  
 16:2 17:6,12 38:14  
 91:14 174:2 177:14  
**CEDC's** 7:15 177:18  
**celebrations** 58:21  
**cell** 41:17  
**cells** 76:1  
**cellular** 54:10  
**census** 52:6 102:7  
**center** 2:17 31:2 41:18  
 58:14 106:18 107:4  
 120:17 123:14  
**centers** 32:14 94:4  
 104:6 105:22 128:11  
 137:4 138:2,21  
**CEO** 1:20 2:8,8,10  
 17:11 92:3 93:11 96:3  
**ceremony** 121:1  
**certain** 68:20 123:18  
 127:8  
**certainly** 20:12 27:13  
 31:17 43:19 48:21  
 57:19 59:22 115:12  
 115:22 159:5 168:8  
**certification** 120:16  
**certifications** 120:22  
**cetera** 33:20  
**chain** 140:5  
**Chair** 1:19 2:16 4:20 6:9  
 6:19 16:9 91:5 172:17

175:15  
**Chairs** 174:2  
**Chairwoman** 5:18 7:10  
 17:4  
**challenge** 18:13 38:21  
 69:16 71:21 147:21  
 147:22  
**challenged** 32:17  
**challenges** 9:9 10:9  
 11:11 14:9,19 17:16  
 48:6 52:3 61:16,21  
 68:8 75:16 136:13  
 147:12 160:15 161:22  
 172:19  
**challenging** 47:7  
**championing** 113:17  
**champions** 164:22  
**chance** 10:14 48:17  
 113:18  
**change** 106:11  
**changed** 30:1 119:8  
**changer** 108:3  
**changes** 10:18 56:11  
**changing** 85:21  
**channels** 60:16 108:7  
 140:15  
**chapters** 20:2 34:12  
**charge** 16:11 175:4  
**charged** 8:15 22:20  
**charging** 39:19 40:7,8  
**charter** 33:19 174:17  
 177:5  
**chat** 81:18  
**Chicago** 2:15 94:11,12  
 94:13 100:13,17  
 101:7,14,15,17,21  
 102:5,9,17 104:14  
 118:4,20 120:10  
 126:17 149:15 150:2  
 150:4 169:20  
**Chief** 2:10,11,15 45:1  
 94:10 176:21  
**children** 9:15,15 10:19  
 11:15 44:20  
**chime** 137:15  
**Chinese** 122:20 123:3  
**choice** 50:3 65:20  
**choir** 57:3 71:14  
**Chromebooks** 37:12  
**church** 39:20 40:12  
 46:22 69:6,10 153:19  
**churches** 41:4 51:6  
 69:13 78:19 128:10  
**circle** 142:20  
**cities** 38:15 97:4 106:1  
 126:6  
**citizens** 125:17  
**city** 20:20,22 44:3,7

45:3 47:11 49:14  
 63:19 65:17 101:7,14  
 102:5 105:22 106:21  
 107:1 131:2 150:3,7  
 151:16,19 169:6  
 175:13  
**city's** 101:8  
**civic** 52:4,11  
**civil** 19:21 42:20 105:10  
 146:12 156:16  
**Clara** 123:12  
**class** 59:9 106:16 107:8  
**classes** 42:16 109:22  
 122:11 135:16  
**classroom** 122:22  
**Clay** 16:10  
**Clayton** 1:20 16:10,15  
 16:19 17:10 19:16  
 20:9 21:6 22:3 25:3  
 35:21 43:12 56:17  
 67:4 73:21 79:12  
 89:15 90:15 91:12  
 92:13 173:21 174:21  
**clear** 9:11 161:11  
**Clearfork** 41:16  
**click** 119:4,5 122:14  
**cliff** 155:20  
**clinic** 41:22  
**clinics** 116:4  
**close** 25:1 29:12 35:16  
 41:22 96:15 174:8  
**closely** 24:4  
**closer** 158:15  
**closing** 3:7 27:3,5  
 172:12 177:1  
**closures** 40:6 104:20  
**clubs** 42:15  
**co-creating** 163:7  
**co-founded** 24:4  
**co-leads** 174:20  
**coach** 37:4  
**coalition** 169:12 170:5  
**coalitions** 65:3  
**Cober** 175:14  
**code** 149:19,20  
**Coho** 7:4 176:7  
**cohort** 120:18 121:4  
**collaborate** 55:15 95:8  
 158:13 164:15  
**collaborated** 143:20  
**collaborating** 144:17  
**collaboration** 40:10  
 41:15 58:2 62:2  
 157:14,21 166:14  
**collaborative** 24:9  
 104:7 158:5  
**collaboratively** 41:2  
**colleague** 165:19 166:7

176:10  
**colleagues** 22:4 44:7  
 175:21  
**collect** 137:9 143:5  
**collecting** 136:10  
**collective** 24:8 39:13  
 40:16 166:15 174:7  
**collectively** 39:14  
**college** 11:15 164:2  
**colleges** 12:15,16  
 143:12,19  
**color** 6:2 8:20  
**Colorado** 125:6  
**combination** 117:9,16  
**Comcast** 2:3 24:21  
 28:14 29:16 31:9  
 33:19 72:4 175:12  
**come** 38:11 43:20 50:9  
 65:14 66:11 75:4 80:4  
 89:18 91:17 93:5  
 101:11 106:17 111:3  
 128:16 133:20,21  
 143:1 146:4 150:22  
 151:1 156:21 161:6  
 171:21  
**comes** 60:11 61:21  
 80:10 120:8 133:1  
 144:10 167:19  
**comfort** 97:15  
**coming** 26:1 33:12 58:8  
 77:19 82:17 109:9  
 143:9 144:16 162:2  
 167:4 171:6  
**comment** 54:4 56:15  
 79:21 82:6 84:13  
 105:13  
**comment/question**  
 81:16  
**comments** 70:20  
**Commerce** 66:5 155:7  
**Commission** 1:2 4:7  
 5:20 20:10 21:7 22:5  
 92:14  
**commitments** 150:11  
**committed** 49:1 57:19  
 72:9 103:17 104:14  
 123:8  
**committee** 5:17 67:12  
**committing** 152:4  
**commonality** 62:13  
**communication** 5:22  
 8:18 18:9 30:20  
**Communications** 1:2,4  
 1:18 4:6,7,20 5:16  
 6:20 17:5 175:16  
 177:4  
**communities** 12:12,21  
 13:10 14:6 24:6 29:17

30:14 37:20 41:8 43:9  
 53:19 55:16,22 56:6  
 65:22 73:14 76:15  
 84:8 88:9 97:2 101:9  
 104:7 109:6 113:16  
 113:20 114:19 115:7  
 115:17 116:9,10  
 117:18,22 118:17,18  
 121:22 123:7,18  
 124:11,19 125:8,15  
 126:11 130:17,22  
 131:13 133:2 140:18  
 143:14 145:11 155:2  
 158:10 160:4 162:7  
 164:19 167:4,14  
 168:22 169:1 172:20  
 173:11  
**community** 4:14 20:4  
 24:3,5,9,12 32:13  
 34:3,4,8 39:10,11,13  
 39:15 40:13,17 41:5  
 41:16,18,20 43:1 49:7  
 52:8,15 53:18 54:6  
 56:13 65:5 74:7 80:14  
 80:18 83:9,14 87:17  
 89:9 90:2 101:15  
 116:3,18 118:5,10  
 119:7,11,18,22 120:6  
 121:16 122:1,5  
 127:21,21 128:5,10  
 128:12 131:7,15,18  
 131:20 133:19 134:11  
 134:22 138:2,21  
 139:11 141:1 143:3  
 143:12,18 145:2  
 146:20 150:5,16  
 151:10 152:12,14,15  
 155:17 156:16 162:20  
 162:21 163:11 164:2  
 165:11 168:5 169:3  
 170:3,3 173:16  
**community-based**  
 29:11 33:6 49:8 62:3  
 64:12 65:6 69:21  
 118:8 121:10 167:8  
**community-specific**  
 120:1  
**companies** 15:2 25:1  
 125:1 140:12 156:3  
**competition** 125:1  
 176:2,11  
**complaint** 136:22  
**complaints** 136:17  
**complete** 120:21  
**compliance** 7:7  
**component** 80:6  
**composer** 10:13  
**comprehensive** 21:18

70:12 101:19 153:7  
 157:14  
**Computdopt** 121:8  
**computer** 120:13  
**computers** 15:16 30:10  
 68:19 97:9 110:9  
**computing** 9:16  
**concern** 119:13 137:2  
**concerns** 79:12  
**conduct** 7:13 53:4  
**conducted** 10:6 117:2  
**conferences** 112:12  
**confidence** 97:16  
**Congress** 10:20 11:5  
 13:3 66:5 85:17  
**connect** 22:21 36:14  
 46:14 81:12 164:3  
**ConnectAll** 1:21 20:15  
 63:13  
**connected** 1:20 4:19  
 6:22 15:15 24:6 32:8  
 41:8 45:5,17 47:1  
 81:12 91:3 94:13  
 98:16 101:18,21  
 103:9,19,19 104:6  
 108:15 116:17 118:21  
 149:15 150:3,19  
 159:6 169:4,10  
 175:17  
**connecting** 12:11 20:3  
 63:21 67:14,15 84:7  
**connection** 32:10 127:6  
 132:21  
**connections** 41:11 77:2  
 104:17  
**connectivity** 9:9 11:10  
 11:22 13:1,7,8,22  
 15:11 18:5 22:17 23:6  
 37:18 45:16 47:6  
 48:10 49:11 51:15  
 63:6 66:3 79:7 80:5  
 97:8 99:2 101:20  
 103:16 108:20 110:2  
 111:9 126:4,9 127:2  
 134:8 135:2 143:16  
 144:8,20 157:18  
 169:17,22 173:6  
**consider** 65:12 133:1  
 154:6  
**consideration** 63:16  
 159:3 165:22 168:19  
**considerations** 10:17  
 124:22  
**considered** 162:15  
**consistent** 64:15  
**Consolidated** 11:19  
 12:22  
**constantly** 57:6 149:1

**constituencies** 154:19  
**consume** 135:15  
**Consumer** 176:7  
**consumers** 12:7 125:2  
**contact** 81:1 118:14  
**content** 104:11 120:4  
 125:4 135:13  
**context** 9:21 96:21  
**continue** 29:2 30:13  
 48:11 49:3,17 50:2  
 51:18 53:7 58:7 60:5  
 64:22 72:4,8,14,19,20  
 72:22 78:22 84:19  
 87:5,13,15 112:3  
 157:4 161:16 164:10  
 174:9  
**continued** 38:2 53:6  
 54:14 89:4 100:22  
**continuing** 90:16 137:9  
 158:13 164:6 168:21  
**continuity** 44:14  
**continuous** 88:13  
 136:11 137:6,14  
**contribute** 111:20  
 127:13 158:16 165:8  
**contributions** 150:10  
**convene** 143:21  
**convened** 1:14  
**convening** 175:3  
**convenings** 177:7  
**conversation** 18:12  
 21:8 38:5 60:3 62:11  
 92:10 93:15 114:10  
 115:3 129:19 172:15  
 172:18 173:4,8  
**conversations** 100:22  
 113:15 114:2  
**converted** 106:7  
**convo** 173:13  
**cool** 132:9  
**Cooper** 21:14  
**coordinated** 128:22  
**coordinations** 75:7  
**core** 150:17 165:21  
**Cornell** 107:12  
**Coronavirus** 11:6,8  
 13:5,13  
**corporate** 2:12 67:19  
 67:20 102:19 105:10  
 108:2,4,11,21 146:12  
 156:15 169:6 170:20  
**Corporation** 24:21  
 40:17 49:13  
**corporations** 140:9  
**cost** 50:15 52:19,22  
 97:7 104:2 119:9  
 156:4  
**costs** 29:7 148:10

**council** 1:4,19 4:6,21  
 5:16 6:4,20 17:5  
 20:11,11 21:7 23:20  
 92:15 172:10 175:16  
 175:22 176:4,17  
 177:4,20  
**Council's** 5:19  
**count** 52:6  
**counties** 125:11  
**counting** 139:20  
**countries** 140:3  
**country** 4:13 21:13 29:2  
 32:12 35:14 36:13  
 38:15 43:16 44:18  
 47:12,19 51:12,13  
 53:12 65:19 70:7  
 71:19 75:15 85:4  
 90:22 94:2,5 97:2  
 98:5 99:15 100:15  
 109:1 123:5 124:8  
 132:5,11,17 139:19  
 141:3 154:8,11  
 167:11 168:9  
**country's** 101:19  
**County** 123:2,8,12  
**couple** 42:2 83:21  
 92:11,17 97:20 98:22  
 105:5 108:10 122:6  
 132:8 149:12 168:11  
**coupled** 103:22  
**course** 21:17 26:21  
 27:15 43:22 44:20  
 51:22 53:7 57:10 58:7  
 58:20 59:5 72:9 73:13  
 85:5 89:17 99:12  
 107:7 120:21 122:16  
 122:21 139:4 152:8  
 157:2 158:15  
**Coursera** 120:5  
**courses** 105:1,2 106:4  
 106:15 107:13  
**cover** 153:8,20  
**covered** 130:11 170:14  
**COVID** 31:12,13 44:1  
 75:19 106:3 140:13  
 145:13  
**COVID-19** 9:22 13:11  
 15:1 17:15 33:11 63:1  
 66:22 104:19 172:18  
**cows** 36:1  
**CPS** 102:1 135:8  
 149:21  
**craft** 130:6  
**crazy** 58:9  
**create** 68:2 78:11 91:3  
**created** 11:8 104:16  
 107:3 122:12 138:15  
 139:2

**creating** 61:9 108:2  
 165:16 167:13  
**creative** 145:14  
**crews** 30:12  
**crises** 78:7  
**crisis** 18:1 36:16 38:2  
 43:7 50:8 75:19,22  
 78:12,21 88:12 106:3  
 135:3 146:13,15  
**critical** 8:22 41:21  
 46:18,21 66:8 73:9  
 79:1 80:5,15 84:3  
 105:11 108:18 114:15  
 116:9,22 124:20  
 131:10 134:20 144:6  
 145:10 146:13 157:7  
 162:6 164:5 165:3  
 177:21  
**critically** 20:13 49:4,8  
 49:21 63:11  
**crucial** 17:21 20:21  
 173:3  
**CTO** 20:20  
**cumbersome** 148:3  
**curious** 31:14  
**curmudgeon** 133:13  
**current** 52:21 90:9  
 164:12 177:5  
**currently** 23:18 104:12  
 164:6  
**curriculum** 106:13  
 116:19 139:6,12  
**customer** 137:3  
**customers** 30:22  
 103:20  
**customize** 116:19  
**cut** 27:12  
**cycles** 163:8

---

**D**


---

**D.C** 20:3  
**daily** 17:17  
**data** 9:14 53:13,17  
 60:10 89:22 102:8  
 107:16,22 114:3  
 129:16,17 136:10,20  
 139:8,9,15 147:18  
 149:7  
**date** 103:7  
**day** 17:9 59:10 100:12  
 100:13 154:16  
**days** 30:5 46:4,9 106:12  
**dead** 142:20  
**Deaf** 30:21  
**deal** 88:8 130:8  
**dealing** 130:10  
**Dear** 165:19 166:7  
**debacle** 110:13  
**debated** 175:6  
**Debbie** 127:18  
**decade** 28:16 29:22  
 30:2 36:13  
**December** 11:20 13:17  
**decisions** 8:13  
**deck** 37:20  
**dedicated** 63:20 64:11  
 176:14  
**deep** 79:15  
**DEER** 113:13  
**define** 92:20 159:3  
**defined** 60:11  
**definitely** 38:20 76:17  
 132:22 141:14 145:10  
 146:16 158:21  
**defray** 148:9  
**DEI** 172:17  
**delays** 151:7  
**deliberate** 163:18  
**deliver** 46:7 49:16,19  
 98:6,7 99:10,13,15  
 100:1 132:3 139:5  
 150:20 163:5 173:5  
**delivered** 37:9 123:1  
**delivering** 81:7 141:2  
**delivery** 34:16 131:22  
**demographic** 153:4  
**demographics** 122:18  
**DeNigro** 176:22  
**Denver** 106:1  
**Department** 2:6,14  
 21:11 27:4,18 44:12  
 44:16 45:4 60:15,18  
 95:6,16 98:3 113:3  
 143:10 155:6 166:3  
**depending** 146:21  
**deploy** 11:16,17 15:16  
 37:10  
**deploying** 27:6  
**deployment** 1:8 3:5  
 4:10 5:2,4 10:18  
 13:19 14:15 16:18  
 18:6 25:21 26:11 29:8  
 29:15 30:11 33:4  
 57:10 85:2,4 88:1  
 177:11  
**Deputy** 20:19  
**described** 46:17 60:14  
**design** 98:7 121:11  
 134:21 135:19  
**designated** 1:15,17 4:5  
 7:3 13:9  
**designed** 12:13 15:22  
 104:19 119:22 136:4  
 143:5,15,17,18,18  
 155:19  
**designing** 120:8 134:19

**desire** 14:7  
**desk** 42:11 120:11  
**destroyed** 128:9,13  
**destruction** 15:5  
**Detroit** 24:5 39:9,11  
 40:12 58:9,11,14 78:5  
 78:10  
**develop** 14:3 98:6  
 104:18 113:6 114:3  
 150:6 162:11 164:6  
**developed** 34:2,11  
 39:22 41:1 99:22  
 104:4 107:6  
**developing** 6:11 15:20  
 74:10 114:4 164:18  
**development** 7:18  
 20:16 40:17 49:13  
 98:4 121:5 163:4,6,20  
**developments** 112:12  
**device** 12:9 35:9 36:20  
 52:19 102:11,15  
 107:9 121:15 134:9  
**devices** 9:17 10:18  
 21:17 23:5 33:22 34:9  
 42:11 53:9 68:1,6,14  
 72:1,2 74:22 79:8  
 86:13 98:17 99:19  
 115:14 116:7 121:7  
 121:14 152:9,11  
 159:14  
**DFO** 16:17  
**Diana** 7:4 176:7,9  
**difference** 27:20 31:15  
 59:3 73:19 107:19  
 123:21 125:18 139:16  
**different** 43:17 47:10  
 47:21 55:22 62:12  
 75:15,16 79:19 90:1  
 122:18 123:22 125:3  
 125:5 126:17 127:10  
 127:10 138:2 143:4  
 158:2 162:7 165:16  
 167:10  
**differently** 30:17 62:22  
 66:21 106:20  
**difficult** 36:5 109:18  
 127:8 141:20 147:13  
**difficulties** 147:14  
**dig** 137:22  
**digital** 1:5 2:1,3,5,14,16  
 3:6 4:18 5:9,11,22 6:7  
 6:22 7:11,20 8:17 9:4  
 9:13,20 10:4 14:2,4  
 14:17,20,20 15:21,22  
 16:2,5 18:9,21 21:10  
 21:16,18 24:10,20  
 25:2,2 27:3 29:8,9,10  
 29:12 34:7,10,20

39:17 43:4 51:1 53:10  
 53:10 54:4 55:10,12  
 55:18,20 58:15 59:9  
 61:5,9,17 62:6 63:14  
 65:2,3,4 69:19 70:1,5  
 70:13,15 72:9,12 73:1  
 74:14,16 75:13 79:1  
 80:17 84:2 86:13  
 91:19 92:5 93:13  
 94:13,22 95:4,13  
 96:19 97:11 98:7  
 99:11 100:9 102:4,14  
 103:1 104:10,22  
 107:18 110:16 111:10  
 113:1,9,11,12,18  
 114:5,7 115:3,15  
 116:12,19 117:4  
 118:12 119:21 120:1  
 130:6 131:5,22  
 132:16 135:1,7 142:9  
 150:6,17 151:20  
 152:8 157:7,10  
 160:14,18,21 161:1  
 161:17 162:1,3,5,11  
 162:16,19 163:5,16  
 164:5,15,20 165:1  
 166:6 167:13 168:3  
 169:14 170:17,18  
 174:8,14 177:12  
**digitally** 81:13 86:14  
**diligent** 77:7  
**dime** 87:11  
**direct** 24:12 78:20  
 93:21 163:8  
**Direction** 19:18  
**directly** 87:15 149:21  
 150:9 163:16  
**Director** 2:4,5,10,13  
 20:16 21:9 37:2,4  
**disabilities** 23:2,9  
**disability** 6:3 8:21  
**disadvantaged** 127:21  
**disaster** 63:2 80:3  
**disasters** 80:12  
**discount** 12:6,9 52:19  
**discounted** 61:1  
**discounts** 33:22  
**discrimination** 6:2 8:19  
**discussed** 163:9  
**discussing** 18:21  
**discussion** 4:12 7:14  
 9:8 16:5 18:7 21:20  
 25:4,8 47:9 75:9  
 91:13 174:5  
**discussions** 8:10  
**disproportionate** 42:21  
 110:4 130:4  
**disproportionately**

116:11  
**disrupted** 9:22  
**disruptions** 15:5 17:16  
**distance** 10:9 11:14  
 38:20 104:16 128:7  
 173:1  
**distances** 36:2  
**distant** 128:22  
**distinction** 23:4  
**distinguished** 17:3  
 18:2,15  
**distressed** 76:16,16  
**distribute** 140:16 162:8  
**distributed** 42:10 45:17  
**distributing** 108:8  
**distribution** 102:16  
 121:15 123:10 163:1  
**distributors** 145:4  
**district** 44:18 100:14  
**districts** 143:18  
**diverse** 98:1 117:21  
 121:22 130:17 132:2  
 132:13 133:2 167:14  
 170:5 173:11  
**diversity** 1:4,18 4:6,21  
 5:16 6:5,20 17:5  
 115:6 175:16 177:4  
 177:12  
**divide** 9:13 14:20 25:2  
 27:3 29:9,12 34:7,21  
 51:2 93:13 94:13,22  
 102:4 103:2 116:12  
 117:5 118:12 151:20  
 157:7 174:8  
**divides** 10:4  
**Division** 20:16  
**DMV** 60:16  
**doable** 10:13  
**documenting** 69:18  
**doing** 7:8 19:3 39:4  
 50:6 53:1,10 66:1  
 83:10,10,16 89:6  
 91:18 97:18 98:14  
 105:20,21 115:1  
 116:6 118:14,15,16  
 119:2 120:18 126:16  
 136:21 138:1 139:1  
 146:22 150:18 156:17  
 171:1,2  
**dollar** 82:3  
**dollars** 14:6 57:9 72:11  
 81:21 85:1 113:7  
 151:11 161:4 168:17  
 168:17  
**domestically** 142:16  
**Dominique** 2:16 6:10  
 172:16  
**donate** 97:9

**donating** 116:7  
**door** 46:8 53:2  
**double** 143:8  
**double-down** 145:1  
**doubled** 30:4  
**Downer** 127:18  
**downpayment** 76:9  
**dozen** 42:14  
**dozens** 102:15  
**Dr** 6:9 16:8 172:11,13  
 172:16 174:2,12  
**drafted** 175:7  
**dramatically** 157:15  
**drive** 58:6 97:6 104:4  
 119:18 145:17  
**driven** 49:7,7,22 65:8  
**drives** 37:4 116:7  
 118:15  
**driving** 115:13 140:22  
**drum** 137:20  
**due** 12:3 112:19  
**Duke** 10:14

---

**E**

---

**ear** 158:14  
**earlier** 60:14 68:22  
 167:3 169:3  
**early** 9:10 22:16 27:9  
 30:5 49:9 176:12  
**ears** 19:2  
**easy** 53:3 99:18 122:13  
**EBB** 28:20 33:15 34:22  
 48:8 57:11 103:15  
 108:15  
**ECF** 37:22  
**echo** 57:3 87:5 89:15  
**echoes** 105:15  
**economic** 2:17 11:7  
 49:13 59:16 65:14,20  
**ecosystem** 64:19  
**ecosystems** 24:10  
**Ed** 165:18  
**EDC** 25:13  
**EDT** 1:14  
**education** 2:14 15:6  
 31:20 44:17 59:15  
 67:13 94:11 95:7,16  
 100:17 101:4 113:13  
 113:17 114:13 143:10  
 143:11,22 144:12  
 162:21 164:14,21  
 165:2,7 166:1,3,9  
**Education's** 113:3  
**Educational** 2:15 95:6  
 95:15  
**educators** 112:4 163:20  
**effective** 50:10 54:11  
 123:21 163:5 167:11

- effects** 42:21  
**efficient** 150:21  
**effort** 40:9 44:15,21  
 49:20 75:10 104:7  
 125:12 128:22 131:16  
 150:8  
**effortlessly** 42:5  
**efforts** 6:10 25:1 27:21  
 27:21 40:19 43:1  
 47:10 49:17,19 63:10  
 64:1 73:7 81:3 113:1  
 150:15 165:4,8  
**eight** 15:13 76:3  
**either** 89:7  
**EI** 97:4  
**elderly** 130:9  
**elders** 74:13  
**elect** 103:13  
**Elementary** 144:3  
**elevate** 101:10 129:7  
**eligible** 12:7 55:8 57:13  
 57:20 60:13 103:20  
 103:22 166:5  
**Ellis** 2:8 16:11 18:22  
 92:2,3 93:16 94:7,16  
 95:2,20 96:8 100:3  
 102:18 105:9 109:7  
 111:16,18 115:4  
 117:19 121:19 124:18  
 125:19 127:12,16  
 130:13 133:3,11  
 134:15 137:13 141:6  
 142:18 145:6,18,20  
 146:1,4,10 148:18  
 149:8,10 152:17  
 156:11 158:19 160:5  
 166:16 168:10 170:9  
 171:20 173:21 175:1  
**email** 6:15 92:22 120:13  
**emails** 58:18  
**embedded** 115:17  
**emerge** 171:12  
**emergencies** 78:7 84:8  
**emergency** 4:15 12:2,4  
 13:6,8,12,21 15:9  
 27:14 40:6 48:8 64:21  
 78:16 86:3,4 103:14  
 105:12 108:16 117:13  
 131:4 135:4 140:14  
**emotional** 20:12  
**emphasize** 86:20 87:16  
 171:19  
**emphasized** 162:13  
**emphasizing** 125:16  
**Empire** 20:15  
**employers** 67:16  
**employment** 135:12  
**Empowerment** 1:5 2:16  
 6:7 7:21 16:3 174:14  
**enable** 43:9  
**enabled** 102:10  
**encourage** 105:3  
 168:14  
**encouraging** 43:2  
 164:13  
**endeavors** 169:8,9  
**ended** 108:1  
**endure** 65:11  
**enduring** 64:4  
**engage** 87:15 116:14  
 158:13  
**engaged** 174:17 177:21  
**engagement** 52:5,11  
 81:3 87:16 107:14,20  
 157:21 165:12  
**engagements** 122:16  
**engaging** 4:11 133:2  
**engendering** 170:16  
**English** 23:7 52:15  
 53:20 54:8 136:21  
**enhanced** 12:20  
**enormously** 32:17  
**enrolled** 15:8,10,10  
 102:13  
**enrollment** 147:13  
**ensure** 98:10,16 115:16  
 116:20 137:7 158:12  
 158:15 159:13,16  
 163:10 165:4 170:5  
**entire** 25:12 29:17  
 35:14 64:19 83:15  
 91:8 96:5  
**entities** 15:15 158:16  
**entity** 67:11  
**entrepreneurial** 120:7  
**entry** 148:15  
**epicenter** 21:1  
**equipment** 39:16,18  
 41:19 65:4  
**equipped** 75:22 111:14  
**equitable** 91:3  
**equitably** 112:18  
**equity** 1:4,18 2:2,3,5,14  
 4:6,20 5:16,21 6:6,20  
 7:12 8:16 13:19 14:2  
 14:4,17 15:21,22 16:6  
 17:5 20:5 21:10,18  
 24:10,21 25:3 42:20  
 43:5 55:18 63:15 65:2  
 65:3 69:19 70:1,5,13  
 70:15 72:10,13 79:1  
 80:17 84:2 95:5,13  
 111:11 112:19 113:1  
 113:11,12 114:5,8  
 115:3 130:6 150:6,17  
 157:10 160:19 161:17  
 162:3 163:16 164:16  
 165:1 166:6 167:13  
 169:14 175:16 177:4  
**especially** 31:20 36:14  
 89:16 99:1 105:11  
 109:9 112:18 113:5  
 116:1 138:6 157:21  
**essential** 19:2 34:1  
 36:9 136:11 137:7  
**essentially** 120:19  
 149:17 151:15  
**essentials** 28:17 30:1,6  
 30:22 31:2,18 72:15  
 72:15  
**establish** 76:19  
**established** 87:8  
**esteemed** 8:1 16:17  
 17:8 22:4 172:5 173:9  
**et** 33:19  
**event** 92:22 175:18  
 177:3  
**events** 16:12 62:21  
 66:21 102:16 119:18  
 121:15 176:17  
**eventually** 100:6  
 133:14  
**everybody** 36:19 39:3,4  
 50:12 62:1 64:13 71:6  
 71:11 94:9 96:2 106:9  
 106:11 109:12,16  
 137:21 153:11 160:9  
**everybody's** 88:19  
**everyday** 9:22 162:12  
 164:20  
**everyone-ons** 153:17  
**EveryoneOn** 2:10 93:11  
 96:22  
**EVP** 2:11  
**exacerbated** 9:10  
**exactly** 80:2 134:4,11  
**example** 30:19 31:18  
 37:1 39:8 42:7 48:7  
 57:4 58:21 120:9  
 131:1,12 135:2  
 136:13 144:1 160:17  
**examples** 39:5 42:3  
 104:3 105:7 113:22  
 163:16  
**excellent** 7:22 21:3  
 51:20 56:14 66:7 75:5  
 75:5 81:14,14 82:15  
 82:15 87:1 88:17,17  
 92:13 98:18 171:20  
**excellently** 176:16  
**exchange** 163:1  
**excited** 18:11,14 23:15  
 24:14 61:8 62:14 71:1  
 77:20 92:6 93:14 94:5  
 94:14 139:22  
**exciting** 154:18  
**excuse** 62:20 71:4  
**executing** 71:1  
**Executive** 2:2,3,4,13  
 6:21 19:18 24:19,20  
 93:21  
**exemplary** 32:3  
**exist** 5:12 48:5 52:2  
 129:19 160:13  
**existed** 126:9  
**existing** 69:20 76:11  
 131:11 161:3  
**expand** 50:2 97:21  
 104:17  
**expanded** 98:9  
**expanding** 49:4,11  
**expansion** 22:12,19  
 27:10  
**expect** 4:11 87:11  
**expecting** 139:20  
**expensive** 127:6  
**experience** 10:8 22:7  
 25:7 63:1 66:22 69:10  
 77:15 121:21 143:7  
**experienced** 10:11  
**experiences** 8:2 23:16  
 24:14 132:13 158:2  
 164:17  
**experimented** 122:11  
**expert** 37:7  
**expertise** 138:12 141:2  
**experts** 4:12 177:9  
**exposed** 172:19  
**Exposing** 10:4  
**expressing** 7:9  
**extend** 85:18 176:18  
**extending** 48:13  
**extensive** 42:13 98:2  
**extensively** 99:14  
**extent** 40:7 48:7  
**External** 2:12  
**extra** 137:2  
**extraordinarily** 85:10  
**extraordinary** 17:1  
**extremely** 36:16 157:3  
 158:12
- 
- F**
- 
- fabulous** 58:15  
**face** 75:16 113:21  
 172:20  
**facilitate** 9:2  
**facilitated** 162:22  
**facilities** 2:7 22:10,16  
**facing** 11:11 100:21  
**fact** 99:4 167:22  
**factor** 73:5

**factors** 170:16  
**faculty** 163:3  
**fail** 28:13  
**faith-based** 40:10  
**families** 23:9 68:14  
 97:9 98:16 104:8  
 113:9,17 118:20  
 119:4,16 121:1,3,7,12  
 134:22 135:10 136:8  
 137:1,5 144:9 151:5,5  
 162:10 169:21  
**family** 46:19 58:20  
 69:12 74:21 104:17  
 143:6 149:18  
**family's** 119:12 149:22  
**famous** 59:12  
**fantastic** 7:5 16:4  
 129:12  
**FAQs** 143:16  
**far** 109:16,18 142:1  
 167:11  
**fashion** 77:7  
**favorite** 58:12  
**FCC** 5:18 7:12 8:16  
 12:5 13:2 17:3 18:8  
 25:5 33:17,18 63:5  
 66:6 95:10 157:2  
 176:14  
**FCC's** 15:14 175:22  
 176:3  
**feat** 99:18  
**federal** 1:2,15,17 2:10  
 2:11 4:5,7,15 5:17 7:4  
 14:5,12 15:4,17 35:22  
 53:6 64:3 66:4 67:6  
 77:8 81:7 83:8,12  
 84:18 87:14,20 88:3  
 90:1 94:22 95:9  
 111:13 146:19 148:14  
 150:8 155:14,17  
 158:16 160:20 161:4  
 168:12 170:7  
**feds** 149:3  
**feedback** 89:17,18  
 163:8,12  
**feel** 26:5 96:13 147:19  
**fellow** 103:6 131:8  
 145:8  
**felt** 101:18  
**Fernandez** 2:10 93:7,9  
 93:11 96:20 115:11  
 130:15 158:20 166:22  
**FFC** 22:5  
**fiber** 104:9  
**field** 30:12  
**figure** 38:16 99:19  
 123:20 142:14  
**final** 177:3

**finally** 30:15 31:1 86:1  
 108:11 110:14  
**find** 82:3 114:8 162:3  
 164:9  
**finding** 147:14 148:7  
 154:10  
**fine** 136:21  
**finish** 160:6  
**first** 2:15 16:16,16  
 20:21 21:12 26:3 28:9  
 28:10 29:15 35:15  
 37:6 39:8 43:15 52:1  
 63:4 71:7,17 78:2  
 83:16 84:21,22 86:6  
 87:3,5 92:13 93:6  
 94:10 96:10 102:22  
 103:12 110:15,15  
 112:21 122:7 123:1  
 134:18 136:14 147:21  
 150:4 152:19 160:12  
 160:19 161:6,12  
 165:20  
**fiscal** 13:13  
**fit** 36:3 99:18  
**fits** 145:16  
**five** 45:10 70:13 72:7  
 76:21 101:6 107:7  
 173:12,17  
**Florida** 132:19  
**flowing** 14:6 53:13  
**focus** 5:3 33:6 42:19  
**focused** 24:9 27:13  
 38:7,14 58:5 67:13  
 77:13 85:2 88:15  
 103:4,8 171:16  
**focuses** 74:10  
**focusing** 21:15 69:17  
 74:18 170:21  
**folks** 25:5 26:8 37:8  
 40:21 41:10,14,22  
 53:8 55:12 72:16  
 74:18 82:13 87:22  
 93:5 94:14 95:10  
 97:13 115:14 122:2,3  
 127:9 130:21 131:13  
 131:17,20 132:5,10  
 132:12,18,19 135:4  
 136:15,22 152:7  
 155:1 159:6,16 168:6  
 168:14 169:7,15  
**follow** 119:7  
**following** 4:22 18:20  
**food** 34:15 46:20 78:19  
 116:6 118:15 119:18  
 140:5  
**forecasted** 157:4  
**forego** 149:6  
**foremost** 134:19  
 152:20  
**forge** 14:9  
**forget** 89:21,21  
**format** 99:12 106:5,11  
 132:4  
**forming** 20:10  
**Forty-two** 9:18  
**forward** 5:14 17:21  
 18:18 21:19 25:7 26:1  
 48:2,5 61:15 71:18  
 72:3,11 76:10 79:6  
 90:15 111:6,12 130:2  
 130:6 158:11 160:13  
**fought** 128:19,20  
**found** 37:19 55:7 98:15  
 101:6 122:12 126:2  
 138:3 139:21 147:15  
 162:4  
**foundation** 35:2 55:6  
 108:13 150:3  
**foundational** 9:20  
 120:12 170:1  
**foundations** 140:10  
**Founder** 2:13  
**four** 110:6 173:16 177:6  
**fourth** 100:14  
**FPanel** 90:20  
**fraction** 161:3  
**fractured** 81:4  
**free** 60:19 61:4 72:16  
 89:11 104:8,22  
 110:20 111:1 119:3,4  
 119:7 126:15  
**friction-free** 122:9  
**Friday** 55:6  
**friends** 58:20 69:12  
 73:13 74:20  
**frontline** 65:6  
**fronts** 147:15  
**full** 37:9 161:10  
**fullest** 54:2  
**fully** 100:15  
**fund** 11:8 36:8 88:12  
 104:17  
**funded** 78:14 117:3  
**funding** 4:16 9:9 10:20  
 11:1 12:1 13:1,18  
 14:12 15:18 27:11  
 38:7 64:17 78:16,16  
 87:6,6,7 88:11,13  
 89:4,11 140:8,20  
 150:11 151:15 156:6  
 157:11 158:17 159:1  
 159:15 160:21,22  
 161:2 164:13 165:8  
 166:21 167:5,16  
 168:12 169:13 170:6  
 170:6,7

**funds** 11:13 13:6,7,8,14  
 62:5 65:20 69:20  
 85:14 123:9 150:15  
 166:2,10,15  
**further** 16:13 53:4  
 76:16  
**furthest** 113:9  
**future** 8:13 51:16 62:20  
 66:12,20 68:11 70:21  
 80:9 155:20 156:9  
 177:12  
**Futures** 125:10

---

**G**


---

**game** 108:3  
**gap** 34:10 40:21 41:1  
 78:4,18 124:5,9  
 125:20 127:1 151:15  
 152:3 173:14  
**gaps** 118:21 125:22  
 126:2,3  
**Gate** 1:19 4:18 6:21 7:2  
 175:17  
**Gate's** 4:22  
**Gates** 174:3  
**gather** 8:22 139:7 172:3  
**gathered** 114:3  
**general** 28:8 151:11  
**Generally** 46:4  
**Generation** 2:9 96:3  
**gentleman** 59:7,8,15  
**geographies** 127:11  
**geography** 129:21  
**getting** 41:10 52:5,6,8  
 53:8 55:22 60:16,19  
 73:6 74:18 88:18  
 110:9 115:14 118:20  
 121:7,22 126:16  
 159:13,14,16 165:10  
 171:3  
**Gibbons** 175:13  
**give** 37:1 48:16 66:9  
 81:20 83:19 89:8  
 95:21 114:11 147:17  
 149:6 161:7 170:10  
 172:12  
**given** 33:13 47:18  
 164:17  
**giving** 68:16  
**GLAAD** 2:8 92:4 175:1  
**global** 21:1 160:1  
**glowing** 109:13  
**go** 25:17 26:18 35:17  
 48:3,15 52:12,13  
 56:19 59:6 61:18,18  
 69:6 71:4,5,18 73:19  
 75:21 77:14 78:2  
 82:19 83:7,16 84:13

87:3 88:19,20 99:6  
 106:15 115:8 120:20  
 121:4 127:17 136:18  
 139:4 141:9,10 147:5  
 155:20 169:17 172:9  
 175:21 176:20  
**go-to** 130:12 144:9  
**goal** 160:1 165:20  
 174:7 175:2  
**goals** 114:21 162:12  
 166:9  
**godsend** 148:16  
**goes** 41:12 54:3 142:10  
 156:1  
**going** 10:22 18:3,17  
 22:1 25:14,17 32:3  
 35:17,18 38:11,19,22  
 39:4 43:20 46:6 47:10  
 47:15,20,21 50:22  
 57:2 58:11 59:21  
 61:10 69:17,21 70:4,6  
 73:18 74:1 75:14  
 76:18 77:14,15 79:18  
 81:10 82:22 83:1 87:2  
 88:14,20 90:12 91:16  
 92:8 93:4,5 94:17  
 96:9,11 99:6 106:11  
 106:16 111:6,12  
 123:13 124:18 130:2  
 130:6 133:20,21  
 145:8 156:9 157:13  
 158:7,11,11 160:9  
 161:18 164:1 170:9  
 170:13 172:8,10,12  
**good** 4:3 7:1,2 17:2,2  
 21:5 22:3 24:17 28:2  
 35:13 47:14 59:20  
 62:7 66:14 72:21  
 84:11,11,12,15 93:10  
 93:18,19 94:9,19 95:3  
 96:1,1 109:11 111:12  
 136:1  
**gotten** 136:1  
**government** 15:4 28:19  
 33:13 46:20 53:7  
 54:13 63:17 64:5,9  
 65:9 74:4 77:8,9 83:8  
 83:13 84:19,21 85:8  
 85:12,13 86:18,21  
 87:14,20 89:7 90:1  
 95:9 118:5 128:15  
 129:8 146:12,19  
 147:19 148:14 150:9  
 150:11 155:17 156:8  
 156:14 159:20 167:6  
**Governmental** 176:8  
**governments** 11:10  
 14:13 63:20 151:9

**governor** 21:13 22:20  
 27:2,10 57:19 60:22  
 81:6 133:15 134:13  
**Governors** 58:2  
**Grace** 40:15  
**graduate** 120:21 132:7  
 171:4  
**graduation** 121:1  
**grant** 65:2 108:14 109:3  
 144:14 151:12,12  
**grants** 27:7,7,10 63:6  
 140:15  
**grass** 29:11 39:9  
**grassroot** 78:11  
**grassroots** 154:7,17  
**grateful** 28:20 90:18  
 177:8  
**gratitude** 7:10 176:18  
**great** 8:22 10:13 14:7  
 16:21 17:9 19:15  
 21:19 25:10 27:6,7  
 31:7 38:12 47:19  
 57:15 90:19 94:16  
 95:2 96:8 109:7 115:4  
 117:19 118:2 127:16  
 130:13 131:15 134:15  
 137:13 141:6 145:6  
 150:1 152:17 154:11  
 154:11 156:11 160:6  
 166:17,17 168:10  
 176:12 177:15  
**greatly** 175:18,18  
**Green** 2:10 94:18,19  
 102:21 145:7 156:22  
 175:9  
**Greg** 176:19  
**Greta** 2:1 19:11 23:12  
 23:13 39:1 46:17  
 54:16 55:3 58:8 77:21  
 78:2 79:16 83:18 86:2  
**gripped** 47:14  
**Grisham** 22:21  
**groceries** 58:19  
**ground** 40:22 84:1  
 92:17 121:8 126:19  
 151:17 158:14  
**group** 1:5 2:16 6:6,9  
 7:21 16:3,6,9 39:10  
 44:10 68:2 117:4  
 152:22 153:4 172:17  
 172:17 174:15,16  
**groups** 6:5 90:1 120:19  
 154:8 167:12 170:21  
 171:15  
**growing** 99:1 138:4  
 143:2  
**Guam** 129:11,14  
**guess** 77:18 84:16,17

93:19 115:7 157:1  
**guests** 17:8 22:4  
**guidance** 114:3,11  
 163:17  
**guide** 16:4  
**guided** 46:13 176:16  
**guides** 34:3  
**Gunsmoke** 59:10,12  
**guys** 31:12 47:18 70:8  
 83:10

---

**H**


---

**HACLA** 131:2,8  
**Hal** 2:15 94:8,10 100:6  
 105:16 117:21 134:16  
 142:21 149:11 158:21  
 168:10  
**half** 55:7,8  
**hall** 165:11 176:19  
**halved** 102:3,3  
**Hampshire's** 36:4  
**hand** 52:12,12,13,13  
 58:1 67:3 70:3 71:5  
 84:12,14,14,15 96:14  
 145:20 146:11  
**handle** 82:7  
**handled** 149:21  
**hands** 37:13,19 103:13  
**happen** 18:14 50:22  
 77:13 85:20 155:2  
**happened** 67:17 68:10  
 110:17 127:19 128:2  
 128:14 134:1  
**happens** 52:13 77:6  
 79:14  
**happy** 48:18 59:8,15,18  
 75:6 94:21 95:19  
 141:14 161:8  
**Harambee** 40:13  
**hard** 43:22 63:18  
 135:22 153:4  
**hard-to-get-to** 147:4  
**harder** 63:9  
**hardest** 86:12 101:9  
**hardship** 101:9  
**Harlem** 1:20 17:11  
 40:18 174:22  
**harness** 111:13  
**harnessing** 159:7  
**Harrison** 2:16 6:10 16:8  
 172:11,13,16 174:13  
**hate** 137:20  
**hats** 176:9  
**Hawaii** 19:20 35:4  
**Hawaiian** 74:6  
**headquarters** 20:3  
**heads** 56:18  
**Healing** 42:18

**health** 33:12 42:18,19  
 42:19 116:3 131:7  
 171:10  
**healthcare** 42:2 46:21  
 140:12  
**hear** 4:17 19:2 37:14  
 39:3 43:11 45:9 47:4  
 48:19 50:13 56:21  
 60:1 67:1 75:10 79:20  
 103:2 132:15 141:14  
 149:9 156:14 159:19  
 169:15 174:10 175:8  
**heard** 36:17 96:13  
 102:22 156:9 169:19  
 171:22  
**hearing** 5:14 62:11,16  
 121:20 145:12 149:1  
 157:5  
**heart** 37:13  
**heartwarming** 50:13  
**Heather** 1:19 4:18 6:21  
 7:1 16:20 18:8 25:4  
 38:8 174:3 175:17,20  
**heavily** 27:13 130:5  
 145:11  
**heavy** 41:14  
**held** 113:14  
**hello** 92:2  
**help** 5:9 8:12 9:1 11:21  
 12:13 13:9 42:11  
 49:10,15 63:2 74:20  
 76:7 85:14 86:12  
 95:11 103:18 104:4  
 105:3 108:15,18  
 113:8 120:10 126:20  
 128:12,16 131:21  
 137:5 140:14,17  
 141:15,16,22 142:15  
 147:11 148:14 149:11  
 151:2,3 152:3,4 154:4  
 156:14 172:9 174:8  
**helped** 7:17 12:18  
 27:20,20 107:4  
 118:21  
**helpful** 148:20 156:19  
 157:20  
**helping** 7:5 9:6 22:15  
 28:3 30:7 75:12 98:5  
 113:4 114:20 138:3  
 164:4 165:4 166:8  
 171:4  
**helps** 53:9 174:6  
**Heroes** 144:18  
**hey** 136:19  
**hi** 23:13 24:17 94:19  
 95:22 172:13  
**high** 109:6 171:4  
**high-cost** 50:17

**high-quality** 122:12  
**high-speed** 127:4  
 172:21 173:5  
**higher** 52:22 143:11  
 144:12  
**higher-level** 120:15  
**highest** 101:9  
**highlight** 44:11,22  
**highlighted** 172:18  
**highspeed** 102:10  
 103:10,21 104:9  
**hill** 76:3  
**Hillary** 176:22  
**hire** 138:12 152:7  
**historical** 12:15 14:19  
 126:10  
**history** 76:14  
**hit** 43:22 80:19 103:6  
 109:21 139:21  
**Hochul** 81:7  
**hold** 43:2  
**holistically** 55:20  
**Holly** 176:20  
**home** 9:17 10:3 32:18  
 35:6 36:15 54:11  
 56:22 57:18 74:13,14  
 97:17 101:2,8 102:10  
 102:11 124:2 127:5  
 172:22  
**homes** 29:4  
**homework** 40:5  
**honest** 82:18  
**honestly** 87:19 88:8  
**honor** 17:12  
**honored** 8:4  
**hook** 56:10  
**hope** 62:17 80:10 92:6  
 166:12  
**hopeful** 157:13  
**horse** 142:20  
**hosted** 99:4  
**hotline** 61:11  
**hotspot** 42:11  
**hotspots** 15:16 29:1  
 37:10  
**hours** 71:9 76:3 82:20  
 102:13  
**house** 76:5 92:11  
**household** 69:2 97:14  
 135:11  
**households** 10:7 12:3  
 15:8,10 32:7 55:8  
 57:13,21 68:15,18  
 69:1 97:10 101:22  
 102:4,8 104:1 127:4  
 136:2 150:19,21  
 157:16 169:4,10  
**housekeeping** 6:12

**housing** 45:3,3,13,20  
 46:2 49:12 66:2,3  
 98:3,4 107:1 110:3,5  
 116:3 131:1 151:3  
 153:18  
**Houston** 59:4,7 104:14  
**Howland** 24:1  
**HR&A** 2:2 23:18  
**hubs** 12:20 39:15,15  
 42:7 104:12 143:13  
**HUD** 98:4  
**hug** 90:21  
**huge** 34:10 51:7 73:4  
 107:19 155:12  
**human** 114:17  
**Humana** 108:13  
**hundred** 15:13 35:3  
**hunkered** 134:11  
**hurricane** 128:3 133:18  
 134:5  
**hurricanes** 129:2  
 133:17  
**hybrid** 106:5 156:8  
 176:17

---

**I**


---

**idea** 150:1 166:4  
**ideas** 18:18 72:21  
 154:11  
**identified** 45:11 175:7  
**identify** 5:10 116:15  
 124:11 136:12 166:8  
**identifying** 145:2  
**IEPP** 31:19  
**illustrate** 164:8  
**illustrates** 14:11  
**imagine** 99:17  
**immediate** 15:4 49:2  
**immediately** 28:18  
 50:11 140:14  
**immigrant** 143:1 171:6  
**immigrants** 52:16  
**immigration** 151:2  
**impact** 47:4 79:4 90:11  
 97:21 113:4 132:11  
 139:10 142:13 160:3  
 162:15 164:7,12  
 166:15,20 167:17  
 171:18  
**impacted** 65:22  
**impactful** 42:3 119:14  
**impacts** 33:8  
**imperative** 167:5,16  
**implement** 26:8,13 33:1  
 63:12 64:3 65:1 96:18  
 100:7  
**implementation** 112:8  
**implemented** 5:4

130:19 131:3 145:13  
 160:18 163:10  
**implementing** 27:6  
 161:14 174:7  
**importance** 17:19  
 167:1  
**important** 7:13 8:8,9  
 10:12 17:13 20:13  
 23:16 30:11 31:21  
 32:16 38:20 43:7,18  
 49:4,6,8,21,21 51:7  
 51:12,13 52:10 54:14  
 56:6,11 59:19 60:5  
 63:11 71:15 73:2  
 85:10,20 87:18 90:10  
 91:7 116:13 117:7,17  
 130:19 133:1 150:12  
 150:14 152:21 153:1  
 153:8 157:3 159:11  
 163:10 168:18 169:14  
 170:4 173:2  
**importantly** 10:19  
 116:15  
**impressive** 5:15 176:6  
**improve** 11:22  
**improvement** 136:11  
 137:6,11,14  
**improving** 171:9  
**in-language** 33:20  
**incarceration** 171:7  
**include** 65:4 79:18  
**included** 12:1,14 13:1,5  
 13:12,17 14:1 129:22  
 152:21 167:15  
**includes** 23:7 173:22  
**including** 4:14 6:9  
 22:22 24:11 42:19  
 44:16,19 46:16,20,22  
 65:8 66:1 95:10 97:3  
 161:22 166:5 167:7  
**inclusion** 1:5 2:16 4:19  
 6:8,22 7:21 9:4 14:17  
 16:3,6 98:7 107:18  
 131:5 142:9 166:6  
 170:17 174:14  
**inclusive** 66:10 129:17  
 153:7  
**income** 23:1 53:20  
 126:7  
**incomparable** 16:14  
**incorporating** 158:1  
**increase** 11:13 12:13  
 12:18 58:4 65:20  
 113:8 157:16 177:10  
**increased** 30:3  
**increases** 171:14  
**increasingly** 112:4  
**incredible** 17:4,7 44:21

47:3 83:10 91:6  
 121:17 149:14  
**incredibly** 8:4 25:6 43:6  
 44:9,14 47:7 79:6  
**individual** 114:21 139:9  
**individuals** 125:17  
 135:18  
**industries** 17:18  
**industry** 22:14  
**inequality** 27:1  
**inequity** 14:20  
**influence** 130:4  
**inform** 9:1 27:21 48:2,4  
 160:12  
**information** 2:6 9:1  
 21:12 27:5 28:2 38:13  
 44:12 47:19 62:8  
 66:15 115:9 120:12  
 131:10 135:8,14,15  
 137:9 143:3,6,14  
 144:7,10,11,14,15,20  
 145:4 148:19,21  
 149:22 162:22 165:21  
 169:18 172:2,3,4,7  
**informative** 4:11 92:9  
**informed** 8:13  
**infrastructure** 11:18  
 13:16 22:17 63:14  
 64:6,10 70:16 76:11  
 76:12,17,20 85:1 88:1  
 112:16 134:7 138:18  
 160:17 161:21 168:16  
**infusion** 155:15  
**initial** 60:21  
**initially** 61:15  
**initiated** 5:10  
**initiative** 113:12,13,14  
**initiatives** 124:13 153:6  
**injection** 9:8  
**innovation** 6:5 154:7  
**innovative** 78:4,11,13  
 112:5 120:8  
**insightful** 92:9  
**insights** 8:12  
**install** 39:17  
**Institute** 41:16  
**institutional** 125:4  
 144:12  
**institutions** 12:14,17  
 12:19 51:5,5 55:15  
 56:4,10 65:5 78:22  
 83:22 84:1 118:10  
 128:6 138:11 143:11  
 162:22 163:3  
**instruction** 37:9 60:18  
**instructors** 132:9  
**instrumental** 130:10  
**insurers** 140:12

**integrating** 171:5  
**intended** 137:8  
**intentional** 132:1,12  
**intentionally** 114:11  
**interest** 140:3  
**interested** 141:15  
**interesting** 23:3 31:14  
   92:9 94:17 96:9 100:4  
   117:20 141:21 142:6  
   142:8 149:5 156:13  
   157:1 169:15  
**interestingly** 126:1  
**interests** 135:12  
**interfaced** 129:9  
**intergenerational** 74:9  
   74:19 75:10  
**intergenerationally**  
   74:17  
**interim** 78:16  
**international** 142:3  
**internet** 4:16 9:16 21:16  
   23:6 28:16 30:6,22  
   31:2,18 32:2,8 33:21  
   34:9 35:8 36:20 37:21  
   40:3 45:15,17 52:20  
   53:4,15,22 54:1,10  
   58:17 59:6 63:21  
   72:14,15 89:2 101:1  
   101:17,19 102:10,10  
   104:9 105:2 110:20  
   110:21 119:3,4 126:8  
   127:4 135:5 136:19  
   149:5,6 152:2 159:8  
   172:21 173:3 175:10  
**interplay** 103:2  
**interventions** 7:17  
**intranets** 40:1  
**introduce** 6:18 16:14  
**introduction** 3:2 19:8  
   19:14,17  
**intrusive** 147:20  
**intrusiveness** 148:20  
**invaluable** 118:19  
**Inventing** 63:13  
**invest** 11:18 29:10  
   51:14 62:5 64:5,22  
   72:4,20,22 153:14,15  
   173:18  
**invested** 57:9  
**investing** 63:10,16  
   124:12 154:2  
**investment** 13:16 28:10  
   65:15 87:13 154:16  
   154:20,22 160:18  
   170:17 171:13  
**investments** 65:19 67:8  
   70:22 72:6 76:7 87:12  
   89:20,21 107:18

  162:5,16 165:6  
**involve** 134:20  
**involved** 25:7 39:5 88:4  
**Irma** 128:3,4,5  
**Islander** 19:21 53:19  
   54:20 74:6  
**islands** 2:9 96:3,5,6  
   109:9,14 111:4  
   127:20 128:1 129:10  
   129:13,18 130:5  
   141:22 142:12,13  
   146:8 147:5 169:16  
**isolated** 45:13 69:3  
**ISP** 64:10  
**ISPs** 48:22 49:8,18 51:7  
   64:12 65:8,9 90:2  
   96:5 110:21 148:8,10  
   152:11 167:7  
**issue** 29:21 101:5,11  
   112:2 114:12,18  
   141:19 159:5 162:1  
**issues** 42:19 94:22  
   100:20 101:2,4  
   109:20 110:7,8  
   118:22 142:3,13  
   151:7,21 175:6  
   177:21  
**items** 33:12

---

## J

**Jamila** 1:14,17 4:4 7:2  
   83:1 174:11  
**Jeff** 176:18  
**Jersey** 163:18  
**Jessica** 5:18 17:4  
**Ji** 2:14 95:2,4 111:18  
   141:9,10 142:18  
   160:11 161:6  
**job** 38:6 76:8 88:15  
   92:8 171:3  
**jobs** 13:16 54:12  
   160:18  
**Johnson** 1:15,17 2:2  
   4:3,4 19:11 24:16,17  
   24:18 28:5,7 31:17  
   43:12 57:2 71:7,11  
   82:1,9,12 83:1 84:16  
   91:11 174:12 175:11  
**join** 8:5 21:2  
**joined** 22:18 176:3  
**joining** 93:14  
**Joint** 2:17  
**Josh** 20:8 44:3 48:14  
   50:5 63:2 78:1 79:20  
**Joshua** 1:21 19:10  
   20:14 67:5  
**Joshua's** 43:21  
**journey** 16:21

**Judge's** 23:4  
**July** 20:18  
**jump** 19:13 25:21 47:21  
   47:21 96:12  
**jumped** 67:18,20  
**justice** 169:9

---

## K

**K-12** 97:10  
**Kamber** 2:13 47:5  
   93:17,18,20 105:14  
   122:6 124:19 125:22  
   137:17 141:17 142:17  
   152:19 170:12  
**Karmarkar** 176:22  
**Kate** 2:8 16:11 18:22  
   92:3 100:10 105:8  
   172:14 173:21 175:1  
**Kate's** 161:18  
**keen** 97:12  
**keep** 7:6 15:14 22:1  
   35:18 38:22 59:17  
   62:14 71:18 80:9  
   81:12 82:16 89:14  
   156:8  
**keeping** 63:11 146:17  
**kept** 46:6  
**key** 9:4 10:17 49:22  
   63:16 74:8 84:3 85:12  
   99:9 143:21 145:9  
   146:11  
**kid** 10:8  
**kids** 2:15 76:2 94:10  
   100:16 101:7 102:4,9  
   110:6,12 135:5 171:4  
**kind** 21:13 40:20 41:6  
   42:5 53:22 64:20 86:4  
   101:10 106:7 117:15  
   124:20 136:4 140:7  
   166:19 169:2  
**kinds** 78:18 107:14  
   168:7  
**knew** 101:4 117:6  
   131:14 135:8,9,10,11  
   138:4,18  
**knocking** 53:2 154:15  
**know** 10:1 26:6 27:1  
   29:9 30:10 33:11 34:6  
   34:7,13,15 35:12,16  
   38:16 39:21 40:20  
   41:11 42:7,15 43:1,3  
   43:22 44:14 46:6,17  
   47:5,11 50:20 52:7,14  
   52:17,20 53:5,6 54:11  
   54:21 55:11,22 57:4  
   57:12,18 58:10 59:2,5  
   59:12 60:10 61:20,22  
   67:3,21 68:6,10,13,17

  68:21 69:3,10,22 70:2  
   70:9,11 71:9,10,13,17  
   71:22 72:2,3,12,16  
   73:4,9 74:8 76:4,21  
   77:21 78:9 79:6,17,17  
   80:2,4,11,12 81:5,17  
   81:21 82:7 83:5,20  
   85:9,10,21,21 86:2,17  
   87:10,17 88:10,18  
   89:6 90:7 97:15 99:7  
   99:12,20 105:5  
   106:10 112:3 121:9  
   125:13 126:15 138:6  
   138:7,8 143:10 144:5  
   149:3 154:12,18,19  
   159:3

**know-how** 134:9  
**knowing** 36:19 112:22  
   161:11  
**knowledge** 8:3 177:9  
**known** 11:7 13:4 17:6  
   113:12  
**knows** 92:19 114:13

---

## L

**la** 132:18 147:4  
**lack** 32:10 86:18,18  
   101:1  
**lacked** 9:20  
**lacking** 85:5  
**lady** 176:6  
**lag** 110:16  
**lands** 12:8 36:1  
**landscape** 36:5  
**language** 23:8 33:10,16  
   34:3 89:5,8,10 123:1  
**languages** 31:3 33:14  
   42:15  
**laptop** 154:13  
**laptops** 34:21 35:3  
   42:10 68:19  
**large** 36:3 122:20  
   153:15,22 154:22  
**large-scale** 154:21  
**larger** 122:14 124:4  
   131:16 138:10 154:2  
**largest** 44:17 76:14  
   100:14 124:9  
**laser** 103:4,8  
**lastly** 6:12 13:15 130:1  
   176:10  
**late** 27:9  
**launch** 101:17 114:6  
**launched** 28:22 101:21  
   113:11 136:14 139:17  
**launching** 11:3  
**Law** 112:16 161:21  
**lay** 125:20

**lays** 125:2  
**lead** 14:8 16:14 24:22  
 40:10 112:22  
**leaders** 17:6 19:5 74:10  
 77:10 113:6 114:4  
 133:6 137:16 143:17  
 144:12 165:2,8  
 174:10  
**leadership** 7:11 16:22  
 19:7 25:4 134:13,15  
 172:2 174:13,18,20  
 175:18  
**leading** 16:11 25:3 31:9  
 175:4  
**leads** 156:12 166:14  
 173:20  
**leap** 76:10  
**learn** 9:3 15:1 31:8  
 40:22 86:13 106:9  
 107:8 115:8 117:10  
 132:21 135:6 142:7  
**learned** 1:7 4:9 7:16 8:6  
 8:9 17:13,22 18:4  
 50:9 67:9 71:18 75:18  
 91:2 106:19 137:20  
 161:13 170:19 177:2  
**learner** 112:9 113:20  
**learners** 23:8 95:13  
 113:8,16 120:5  
 162:10 163:11 165:4  
**learning** 10:10 11:14  
 13:11 44:20 67:14  
 68:2 69:18 71:12  
 95:19 102:14 104:6  
 104:16,18,18 112:5  
 115:10 117:14 119:21  
 120:1 128:7 129:1  
 135:1,7,12 144:18  
 152:8 163:8,22 173:1  
**learnings** 68:5 177:10  
**leave** 56:9 86:15 111:19  
**led** 17:3 60:8 78:10  
**Lee** 174:3  
**left** 9:13 51:1 83:2  
 124:20 129:10,12  
 153:5 160:7  
**Legislative** 2:12  
**Legislature** 81:6  
**lessons** 1:7 4:9 7:16  
 8:6,9 17:13,19,22  
 18:4,17 63:12 67:9  
 91:2 173:8 177:2  
**let's** 9:11 19:12,13  
 25:21 48:3 59:22 83:4  
 88:19 89:21 92:19  
 93:3 96:9,16 110:22  
 133:4 146:18 147:5  
 160:1

**Letter** 165:19 166:8  
**level** 65:17 77:12 80:14  
 97:16 106:17 154:7  
 154:17 164:17 168:15  
 168:16  
**leverage** 56:5 91:2  
 97:16 138:10 142:22  
 162:11 163:20  
**leveraged** 67:18  
**leveraging** 62:5 69:19  
 112:4 123:17 143:9  
 145:3 162:20  
**LGBTQ** 122:3  
**libraries** 13:9 23:21  
 39:7 42:5 51:6 62:4  
 78:21 79:5,10,11  
 98:11 117:9 128:6,9  
 138:20  
**library** 23:22 24:1 42:6  
 46:16 79:3 104:22  
 125:10  
**licensing** 108:9 124:13  
 138:16 139:4,12  
**life** 10:1 15:6 85:21  
 119:6  
**lifeline** 38:1  
**lifetime** 14:16 38:9 57:6  
 85:7  
**Lift** 28:22 32:6,12  
**light** 26:22 63:1 66:22  
**limit** 146:18  
**limited** 52:15 53:20  
 112:13  
**line** 106:8  
**lined** 37:14  
**lineup** 161:12  
**lining** 50:8  
**list** 23:2  
**listen** 9:3 18:12  
**listening** 17:8 80:17  
 113:15 150:5 172:15  
**literacy** 2:5 21:10,16  
 34:6,10 65:4 74:16  
 104:10 105:1 162:2,5  
 164:5 168:3  
**literate** 86:14,14  
**little** 11:1 30:16 44:4  
 59:21 96:21 100:11  
 111:21 112:2 137:21  
 158:14 164:2 170:12  
 170:13  
**lived** 132:13  
**livequestions@fcc.gov**  
 6:15 93:1,2  
**livequestions@ffc.gov**  
 6:16  
**lives** 17:17 59:19  
**living** 9:12 12:8 45:13

131:13  
**local** 11:9 13:13 15:3  
 23:22 39:17 40:13,14  
 41:22 55:15 56:3  
 63:19 76:15 77:10,11  
 81:10 84:8 87:16 97:1  
 104:7 152:13 154:1  
 165:7 168:15,17,21  
 169:12 170:6  
**localities** 123:6 124:8  
 151:9  
**locally** 65:9  
**location** 80:22 151:2  
**locations** 110:2,3  
 154:10  
**lockdown** 45:14  
**lockdowns** 9:12,22  
 11:12 15:2  
**logistics** 110:8  
**loneliness** 107:21,21  
**long** 23:2 51:14 76:22  
 84:6 87:12 89:11  
 139:13 148:5 165:1  
**longer** 136:16,17  
**look** 5:14 20:13 21:19  
 25:7,22 29:7 38:14  
 48:2,4 59:1 63:17  
 72:3,4 79:4 81:21  
 82:6 90:15 117:4  
 146:6 160:13 167:10  
**looking** 35:1 48:1,1,4  
 51:21 55:19 72:11  
 78:8 132:10 160:12  
 167:3,21 168:7  
**Los** 97:3 99:5 104:13  
 131:2  
**lose** 151:14,16,19  
**losses** 8:11  
**lost** 81:1 135:2  
**lot** 15:12 23:10 28:3  
 31:7,13 33:10,16 37:8  
 40:21,22 41:9,12 52:4  
 57:22 71:15 74:10  
 75:18,19 77:19 79:18  
 88:9 97:18 106:19  
 110:2,10 112:17  
 116:1 121:21 125:13  
 126:1,3,22 129:15  
 134:6,6 138:5,20  
 139:9 140:3,4,11  
 144:9 147:15 149:9  
 151:11 154:10 161:5  
 162:7 164:22 170:14  
 170:19 171:22 174:1  
**lots** 39:20 124:16  
**lottery** 121:11  
**Louis** 28:4,4 175:9  
**Louisiana** 58:1

**love** 48:15 58:8,11 67:1  
 73:18 75:9 137:13  
 152:17 157:3  
**loved** 132:16  
**low** 23:1 41:12 52:19  
 53:19 77:16 97:7  
**low-cost** 30:10 33:21  
 39:16 41:19 52:20  
 53:4  
**low-income** 10:7 12:2  
 23:8 50:20 76:1 87:7  
 130:10  
**lower** 126:7 127:2  
 145:22 148:15  
**Lujan** 22:20  
**lunch** 60:20

---

**M**


---

**mailers** 27:16  
**Maine** 142:2  
**mainland** 128:1 133:21  
**maintain** 39:18 44:14  
 64:16 81:11 156:5  
**maintaining** 47:6 64:1  
**major** 38:15 113:19  
**makers** 58:4 67:6  
**making** 8:15 64:19  
 65:15 85:13 97:12  
 103:9 125:18 131:19  
 133:11 139:16 158:22  
 167:13 169:13 172:3  
 177:14  
**manage** 156:5  
**management** 176:21  
**Manager** 2:7 22:9  
**mapped** 124:7  
**March** 1:11 11:5 13:3  
 36:18 100:13  
**marginalized** 122:4  
**Maria** 128:3,4,5  
**market** 156:7  
**marketing** 119:2,8  
**markets** 29:19  
**marks** 177:3  
**Maryland** 57:18,20  
**mass** 36:3 119:2  
**Massachusetts** 35:4  
 164:3  
**massive** 78:9  
**match** 170:6  
**material** 40:1  
**materials** 33:21 106:8  
 107:10 122:19,21,22  
 138:11 140:1,4  
**Mathieu** 176:11  
**matter** 8:14 10:16 68:16  
 91:22 98:22 178:2  
**mattered** 73:5,7

**matters** 8:15 172:2  
**maximize** 95:11 113:4  
 161:2 162:15 166:1  
 166:20 167:4  
**maximizing** 164:12  
 166:15  
**Mayor's** 45:1  
**mean** 43:17 47:18 52:4  
 61:13 62:10,21 74:11  
 88:21 92:19 142:19  
**meaningful** 159:10,15  
 160:2  
**means** 47:5 137:22  
 159:12 163:2  
**meant** 40:21  
**measure** 50:16 171:10  
**media** 1:19 176:21  
 177:11  
**mediator** 129:6  
**meet** 116:4 120:5 158:9  
 158:10 172:21 173:14  
**meeting** 80:21 114:19  
 116:20 132:17 162:12  
**meetings** 165:11  
**meets** 137:8  
**member** 17:11 175:5  
**members** 6:8,13 17:3,6  
 26:7,13 28:3 33:1  
 52:8 69:12 96:17  
 116:18 163:11 165:13  
**membership-based**  
 20:1  
**Memphis** 168:1  
**mental** 42:19  
**mention** 78:4 117:1  
**mentioned** 16:17 29:21  
 96:22 103:6 141:12  
 142:21 158:3 162:1  
 167:2  
**mentioning** 86:3  
**message** 38:4  
**messages** 119:3  
**messaging** 119:8  
**met** 59:7  
**methodological** 139:6  
**Metro** 120:10  
**Mexico** 2:7 22:11,18  
 23:3 35:21 37:3 50:5  
 75:12,17 76:13  
 142:12  
**Miami** 123:13,15  
**Michele** 175:13  
**Michelle** 22:20  
**Michigan** 58:9  
**Microsoft** 117:3 129:12  
 175:1  
**middle** 96:4 109:17  
 110:19

**midst** 117:5  
**MiFi** 76:4  
**mile** 96:4 110:19  
**miles** 76:4,15 109:15  
**million** 9:14,18 15:8,9  
 29:4,5 44:19 57:14  
 60:9,12 63:7,8,9  
 70:14,16,17 104:16  
 108:14 109:3 113:5  
 118:7 150:7  
**millions** 32:7 57:16  
 72:16 73:13 85:22  
**Milwaukee** 97:3  
**mind** 11:3 26:16,18  
 32:20 35:18 63:12  
 71:4,19 80:9 146:17  
 147:7  
**minds** 43:2  
**minorities** 23:1  
**minority** 12:12,16 53:17  
**minutes** 83:22 105:6  
 160:7  
**missed** 129:13,14,14  
 176:4 177:15  
**mission** 5:19 22:21  
 49:7,22 65:8  
**mobile** 34:13 76:1  
**mobility** 59:16  
**mobilized** 15:2  
**model** 53:16 120:18  
 139:2 167:21  
**models** 167:10 168:7  
**modem** 41:17  
**moderate** 17:12  
**moderated** 18:22  
**moderating** 16:16 92:4  
**moderators** 173:19  
**Modernization** 36:9  
**modified** 48:12  
**module** 34:11  
**modules** 106:5  
**mom's** 22:1  
**moment** 8:5 78:13  
**momentarily** 91:16  
**moments** 58:12  
**momentum** 151:19  
 155:22  
**money** 35:1 76:8 85:1  
 85:19 126:13 151:8  
 156:4  
**Montgomery** 123:2  
**month** 12:7,8 30:2  
 103:21  
**months** 10:16 20:21  
 110:15,15 177:7  
**morning** 4:3 7:1,2 17:2  
 17:2 21:5 22:3 24:17  
 93:10,18,19 94:9 95:3

96:1,2 109:12  
**mothers** 110:10  
**motivation** 14:8  
**motive** 128:18  
**move** 15:22 17:21 28:5  
 32:20 47:15 61:15  
 66:17 67:8 111:20  
 127:14 133:4 135:3  
 141:7  
**moving** 18:18 19:12  
 62:14 82:16 140:20  
**multigenerational**  
 138:22  
**multilingual** 162:17  
**multimodal** 162:18  
**multiple** 153:20  
**municipal** 64:6  
**mute** 43:13,13 79:12,14  
**muted** 43:14  
**myth** 53:17

---

**N**


---

**NAESP** 144:2  
**nailed** 175:3  
**name** 4:3 13:21 17:10  
 19:17 22:8 93:10  
 94:20 95:4 149:16  
 164:1  
**names** 26:17  
**NASSP** 144:2  
**Nation** 1:20 4:19 7:1  
 175:17  
**national** 6:3 8:20 18:13  
 19:20 80:11 93:12  
 95:17 96:22 113:14  
 114:7 117:2 121:9  
 129:15,18,22 144:3,4  
 153:19 165:12  
**nationwide** 62:11  
 104:15 108:8  
**native** 19:20 23:7 74:6  
**navigate** 36:6 74:21  
 75:13  
**navigating** 58:17  
 164:18  
**navigation** 61:6  
**navigator** 59:9 61:9  
 62:6 74:14  
**navigator's** 58:15  
**navigators** 29:10,11  
 54:4 61:17 73:1  
 162:19  
**NCIA** 112:19  
**nearly** 9:19 102:1  
**neat** 132:15  
**necessarily** 126:13  
**necessary** 162:9  
**need** 9:21 29:9,10  
 53:21 54:5 58:4,7  
 59:1,6 61:7,12 64:14  
 64:16 65:11 68:11,15  
 68:19 72:20 73:12  
 76:10 78:10 79:5 83:7  
 83:12,13,14 84:5,18  
 86:2,7 89:2,17,20  
 90:4,8 97:10 103:18  
 114:17 138:4 146:19  
 150:15 153:6,7,14  
 154:5,9 155:3 159:17  
 162:14 163:3,20  
 173:5,13,14,15,17,18  
 174:9  
**needed** 10:18 13:11  
 47:1 50:17 76:21  
 79:20 85:3 101:4  
 115:15 124:10 140:20  
 141:1  
**needing** 98:15 142:22  
**needle** 15:22  
**needs** 28:18 31:21 53:5  
 54:14 55:19 64:4  
 68:15 85:3 86:17  
 87:17 89:4,7 114:21  
 116:5,20 120:6  
 125:16 155:17 158:10  
 172:22  
**neighborhood** 40:4  
**neighborhoods** 76:2  
 141:3  
**neighbors** 73:14  
 131:14  
**net** 153:3  
**network** 2:9 28:10,12  
 42:1 72:5,6 96:4  
 100:19 127:7 171:9  
**networks** 15:17 71:20  
 77:2 153:18 156:4,4  
**never** 30:1 80:10  
**new** 2:7 10:19 14:9  
 20:17,20,22 22:11,18  
 23:3,21,22 24:3 35:21  
 36:3 37:3 39:10 43:22  
 44:3,8 45:2 49:13  
 50:5 52:16 57:19 63:7  
 63:13,19 75:11,17  
 76:11,13 78:9 81:6  
 104:18 105:22 106:1  
 106:21 107:1 125:5  
 125:10 132:19 163:18  
 171:6  
**NEWCC** 40:14  
**newly** 12:3  
**newly-invested** 163:21  
**Nguyen** 2:4 19:9,13,16  
 19:18 32:21 33:5  
 51:21 54:19 55:1

73:21 88:21  
**nice** 81:15 129:21  
**nicely** 38:8  
**Nicol** 174:2  
**nimble** 79:7  
**nine** 15:8  
**nod** 161:7  
**nodding** 56:19  
**non** 37:20 94:11 98:11  
 100:17 128:14  
**non-citizens** 169:20  
**non-profit** 67:22 93:12  
 99:14 102:16 140:8  
 140:21 157:22 159:21  
**non-profits** 15:3 51:6  
 116:2 117:10 128:11  
**non-traditional** 119:16  
**Norma** 2:10 93:7,7,11  
 96:10 105:16 115:4  
 118:3 126:15 130:14  
 142:21 156:21 158:19  
 166:17  
**Norma's** 118:9 138:6  
**normally** 41:3 128:7,16  
**North** 2:5 21:11,22  
 26:21 27:17 60:8 61:8  
 62:4 67:12 70:13  
 104:13  
**northern** 125:11  
**Northstar** 120:5  
**Northwest** 120:17  
**notable** 113:22  
**notes** 28:3 35:12  
**notion** 169:15  
**NSS** 118:6  
**NTIA** 70:21 111:10  
 157:10,11  
**nuggets** 173:12  
**number** 55:17 92:4,5,18  
 92:21 93:13 96:16  
 97:2,4,5 98:13,20,22  
 101:11 116:8 122:20  
 124:4 130:1 131:16  
 157:16  
**numbers** 119:10 122:15  
 153:22 155:1  
**NY** 1:21  
**NYCHA** 45:5

---

**O**


---

**OATS** 2:13 46:14 93:22  
 105:13,19 109:3  
 122:21 139:3  
**objective** 175:2  
**objectives** 165:17  
**observations** 28:9  
**observe** 71:7  
**obstacles** 87:21

**obviously** 21:15 90:13  
 150:10  
**OCA** 2:4 19:18 34:12  
 52:13 74:1,10  
**occur** 61:5  
**OET** 95:14 164:13  
**offer** 30:21 49:10 61:1  
 72:14 98:20 104:22  
 120:3 148:10,11  
 157:2 162:9 164:22  
 177:6  
**offered** 116:6  
**offering** 97:22 136:5  
**offers** 49:15 97:8  
 103:20  
**office** 2:5,14 21:10  
 22:11,19,20 45:1  
 63:20 64:3 70:16 95:5  
 95:14,14,16 111:22  
 112:22 165:18  
**office's** 165:19  
**officer** 1:15,18 2:11 4:5  
 45:2  
**officers** 7:4  
**offices** 108:7  
**official** 165:19  
**offline** 127:1  
**oh** 53:14 54:21 82:9  
 95:22 102:21 141:8  
 146:3  
**okay** 11:4 54:21 56:18  
 57:1 82:11,12 89:22  
 110:22 166:16  
**old** 84:16 124:6 152:10  
**older** 2:13 45:5,7 46:12  
 93:21 94:2 107:2  
 122:1 124:1 126:7,11  
 152:20 153:2,17  
 171:8  
**oldest** 19:20  
**once** 14:16 38:9,10  
 57:6 61:14 80:22 85:6  
**one-on-one** 42:12  
**one-time** 12:9 50:15  
 64:17  
**ongoing** 165:3 171:13  
**online** 30:8 34:14,17  
 37:9 53:8 58:19 69:10  
 72:1 74:21 104:17  
 106:4,7,13,16 107:6  
 122:8 123:4 124:15  
 125:13 126:5,17  
 177:18  
**onset** 7:19  
**open** 110:22 163:12  
**open-minded** 145:14  
**opened** 29:1 32:11  
**opening** 3:3 4:22 6:19

104:15 123:14  
**operate** 94:2  
**operating** 151:11  
**operations** 44:15  
**opportunities** 5:12 48:5  
 52:2 59:1 65:14 67:15  
 112:17 113:10 120:4  
 120:15 121:11 136:6  
 137:10 154:18 155:10  
 155:11 157:17 160:13  
 162:10 163:6 164:13  
 165:7,12 166:18  
**opportunity** 14:17,18  
 20:6 21:2 22:6 23:16  
 38:9 57:7 65:20 85:7  
 90:15,19 91:6 112:15  
 121:6 155:12 161:20  
 163:12 165:5  
**opt** 46:3  
**optimism** 146:3,6,9  
**optimistic** 133:12 146:2  
**optimistically** 133:10  
**options** 30:21 33:22  
 34:15  
**order** 23:4 32:5 34:17  
 36:9 58:18 90:10  
 122:17 138:10 164:7  
**orderly** 77:6  
**organization** 19:22  
 20:1 24:3,4 33:6  
 40:14 46:14 80:18  
 97:1 99:5 100:18  
 108:5 154:14 169:3  
**organizations** 4:15  
 24:8 40:11 41:2,4  
 43:4 46:22 62:3 64:12  
 65:6,7 67:22 69:21  
 78:20 83:9 84:3 85:16  
 89:9 90:3 98:1,12,14  
 98:20,21 101:16  
 113:16 115:16,19  
 116:6,7,14 117:16,18  
 118:6,9,11 119:11  
 120:7,17 121:11,16  
 128:15 138:21 139:1  
 139:3 140:6 143:3,13  
 143:21 144:18 146:20  
 150:14,16 151:10  
 152:4,14 153:16,18  
 153:22 154:2 156:16  
 158:1 159:1 165:13  
 167:9  
**organize** 49:15  
**organized** 107:9 116:4  
 124:7  
**organizing** 24:13  
**orgs** 41:5  
**origin** 6:3 8:21

**originally** 127:20  
 138:16  
**outcome** 18:7 139:8  
**outcomes** 31:15 107:14  
 170:21 171:12,16  
**outreach** 27:21 52:7,12  
 53:1,5 55:21 63:5  
 74:15 79:8 81:2 111:8  
 116:16 118:19 130:7  
 152:5,6  
**outset** 57:5 60:21  
**outside** 15:17 142:10  
**over-emphasize** 167:1  
 167:20  
**overall** 142:1  
**overcome** 113:21  
**overnight** 37:8 138:13  
**overseen** 12:5 13:2  
 166:3  
**Ovidiu** 2:6 19:11 22:8  
 35:19 50:5 57:5 73:20  
 75:7 77:17 87:2,2,3  
**owners** 34:5,13  
**ownership** 177:11  
**oxymoron** 86:10

---

**P**


---

**P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S**  
 4:1  
**p.m** 178:2  
**Pacific** 2:4 19:19,21  
 53:19 54:20 74:6  
**package** 98:19 113:5  
**page** 143:15 177:18,20  
**paid** 163:18  
**pair** 120:14  
**pandemic** 1:7 4:9 5:6  
 5:10 7:19 8:7 9:10,12  
 11:2,12 12:4 14:7,10  
 15:2 17:14,15 18:4  
 20:22 23:17 24:2 26:9  
 26:14,22 27:4 28:11  
 29:2 30:5 31:16 33:1  
 33:9,10 34:5 35:10  
 40:9 58:22 62:21 64:1  
 65:22 66:20 67:17  
 71:21 73:5,11 74:2,3  
 75:4 79:5 80:10,19  
 86:5 91:3 96:18 97:19  
 97:19 98:9 100:8  
 103:6,8 109:21 111:7  
 112:4 116:1,12 117:3  
 117:5 118:1,13  
 119:19 128:2,17  
 133:17 134:12 135:6  
 163:2 164:18 172:19  
 177:3  
**panel** 3:4,6 5:1,8 16:16

16:16,17 18:3,15,19  
 18:20 19:17 22:6 45:9  
 47:17 67:2 71:8 82:22  
 91:9,18,20 92:4,5,7  
 92:13,18 93:5 94:8  
 102:22 105:6 114:10  
 138:6 156:16 172:6  
**panelist** 19:8 60:4  
 103:6  
**panelists** 6:14 8:1 75:9  
 96:12 114:18 145:8  
 161:13 173:9 174:4  
**panels** 16:4 19:2  
**parallel** 25:1 162:15  
**parent** 140:8  
**parent-facing** 144:17  
**parent/educator** 112:12  
**parenting** 42:20  
**parents** 10:7 100:19  
 120:20  
**park** 75:22 154:15  
**parking** 39:20  
**part** 21:8 34:7,20 48:12  
 52:1 53:16 70:1,15  
 74:11,15 88:10 93:15  
 111:16 121:2 168:4  
 171:17 173:2  
**participants** 116:21  
 117:8 118:18 132:16  
 162:4,13  
**participate** 99:21  
 103:11,14 147:16  
**participated** 15:14  
 174:5  
**participating** 135:17  
 157:8,16 173:1  
**particular** 36:8 44:22  
 45:11 48:20 66:18  
 67:10 79:11 97:10  
 110:11 116:2 123:7  
 129:1 167:22  
**particularly** 44:11  
 50:15 51:18 65:21  
 140:9 169:19  
**partner** 49:18 64:11  
 121:10,15 130:2,12  
 173:16  
**partnered** 27:17 30:20  
 35:2 104:21  
**partners** 33:18 49:22  
 66:5 77:11 81:7,10  
 99:14 111:13 118:17  
 119:7,22 121:7  
 134:22 139:4,12,21  
 140:9 141:1 143:1  
 152:1,13 170:20  
 173:16  
**partnership** 31:19 45:2

45:16 49:12 60:14  
 62:2 101:14 105:10  
 118:5 121:19 135:20  
 146:16 147:2 171:15  
**partnerships** 45:7 60:6  
 60:7 64:20 66:2 67:19  
 72:18 74:4 87:16  
 89:16 94:4 106:2  
 108:12 137:18,19,19  
 140:22 145:9 146:13  
 153:14 167:2 172:1  
**parts** 75:15 85:4 161:7  
 161:10  
**Paso** 97:4  
**passed** 11:5 13:3  
 112:21  
**passion** 7:11  
**path** 14:9  
**patient** 86:10,11,16  
**Patrick's** 58:13  
**patterns** 127:8  
**pause** 91:16  
**paying** 96:15  
**PCs** 121:8  
**peers** 109:13 133:7  
**Pell** 144:13  
**pent** 77:19  
**people** 6:1 8:18 10:3  
 23:1,1 30:7 32:16  
 34:17 36:1 39:17,21  
 40:2,5 53:9 57:15  
 59:6,18 61:11 63:7  
 71:13,22 73:6,7,14  
 80:19 81:12 85:15  
 87:11 93:19 99:19  
 107:4,7,10,13 108:18  
 110:10 121:8 122:9  
 122:13,17 123:15  
 124:1,14 125:13,14  
 126:16,20 127:1,3  
 131:17 132:2,5,17  
 134:3,7 136:5 138:5,9  
 147:16 148:4,9 149:5  
 151:17 153:2 154:4  
 155:2 159:4,12,14,22  
 170:14 171:1 173:15  
 175:8  
**people's** 107:19 138:2  
**Peraetz** 175:9  
**percent** 10:6 53:14 54:9  
 57:20 58:2 102:7,8  
**percentage** 124:2  
**period** 13:12  
**permanent** 13:20 65:21  
**permanently** 49:19  
 50:1  
**permits** 87:21  
**permitting** 88:4

**persistent** 9:13  
**person** 16:21 99:13  
 171:6,8  
**personal** 80:14 139:9  
 147:18 148:20 149:7  
 169:18 175:20 176:20  
**personalized** 45:18  
**perspective** 31:10  
 36:22 75:17,18  
 102:20 112:1 156:13  
 156:15  
**perspectives** 62:12  
 87:19 174:6  
**pertains** 134:2  
**phenomenal** 102:18  
**Philadelphia** 82:14  
 154:1  
**philanthropic** 140:10  
 159:20 168:22 169:8  
 170:3  
**philanthropy** 67:22  
 101:16 118:6 167:6  
 169:6  
**phone** 46:1,11  
**phrase** 54:22  
**physical** 84:14,15  
 112:13 151:1 162:9  
**picked** 124:8  
**pie** 157:7  
**piece** 50:16 157:7  
**pieces** 75:2 114:16  
**Pilot** 12:12  
**pits** 109:14  
**pivot** 37:8 106:10  
**pivotal** 158:12  
**pivoted** 99:10  
**place** 37:17 51:3 58:13  
 67:8,18 68:4,12 102:6  
 128:7 171:19  
**places** 39:21 123:21  
 124:9 125:21 126:17  
 147:4  
**plan** 13:4 21:19 52:20  
 52:21 65:2,10 69:19  
 70:5,13,18,19 71:2  
 150:6 156:10 157:15  
**Planet** 94:3 105:22  
 138:16  
**planning** 6:6 14:4 16:12  
 21:17 164:16 165:3  
**plans** 14:4 15:21,21  
 89:19 113:6 114:5,5  
 157:10 167:13,15  
**plate** 28:19  
**platform** 7:13 46:13  
**Plattsburg** 106:2  
**play** 51:7 56:4 85:12  
 144:6 152:16

**played** 9:4  
**players** 43:7  
**please** 6:14 11:4 14:10  
 91:17 92:20 94:8  
 96:13 177:18,20  
**pleased** 24:13 177:6  
**pleasure** 6:18  
**Pledge** 15:15  
**plug** 131:11  
**plus** 31:3 72:5,15  
**point** 38:21 47:17 55:5  
 74:9 118:9  
**pointed** 112:15  
**pointing** 149:11  
**points** 11:17 39:20  
 107:22 149:14  
**poles** 88:2  
**policies** 61:4 95:12  
**policy** 2:3,15 10:17  
 20:4 24:19 58:4 67:6  
 94:10 95:15 101:4  
**Political** 2:17  
**popped** 92:18  
**population** 26:2 37:3  
 45:12 69:7,7 124:3  
 126:4,7,12 130:9,11  
 130:12  
**populations** 50:22  
 69:22 90:6 115:20  
 132:14  
**portion** 135:2 174:16  
 177:16  
**Portland** 175:13  
**position** 44:1,2 45:22  
 98:18 111:12  
**positive** 115:12 130:3  
 136:7  
**possible** 46:7 112:6  
 135:5  
**possibly** 37:10  
**post** 164:10  
**posted** 91:14  
**potential** 54:3 108:7  
 171:15  
**potentially** 146:15  
**power** 97:17 159:8  
**powerfully** 124:10  
**practice** 23:19 114:1  
**practices** 142:9 146:17  
 157:20 164:8  
**praise** 46:5 48:22 66:4  
 67:5 81:5  
**praising** 44:7  
**pre-registration** 122:10  
**preaching** 71:14  
**predictable** 76:19 87:8  
 88:13  
**preparation** 79:18

**prepared** 62:20,22 63:2  
 66:20 74:2 75:4,20  
**preparedness** 17:20  
**preparing** 80:9  
**prequalified** 149:18  
**PRESENT** 1:17  
**Presentation** 3:3  
**presented** 34:11 38:8  
**presents** 14:18  
**President** 1:19,21 2:2,3  
 2:8,8 4:18 6:22 13:15  
 20:15 24:19,20 92:3  
 96:2  
**presiding** 1:15  
**pressing** 113:20  
**pressure** 170:11  
**pretty** 72:21 106:12  
 149:16 160:8  
**previous** 78:7  
**Previously** 98:2  
**price** 30:1  
**primarily** 101:8 105:21  
**primary** 55:14  
**principal** 2:1 23:18  
**principals** 144:4,5,6  
**prior** 9:11 27:4 97:19  
 118:12  
**priority** 21:14 27:3  
**private** 15:2,15 67:21  
 67:21 74:4 83:8,13  
 85:8 90:2 128:18,19  
 129:9 146:20 152:1  
 156:2 157:22 159:21  
 167:7  
**probably** 38:11 43:20  
 76:7 96:11 110:14  
 147:10  
**problem** 10:14 38:10  
 77:16  
**problems** 50:10  
**proceeded** 14:10  
**process** 15:20 21:18  
 71:1 88:4 138:5  
 147:13 148:2 149:20  
 150:5  
**processes** 164:16  
**product** 103:20  
**products** 5:22 30:18  
**professional** 163:4,19  
**professionals** 132:6  
**professors** 132:8  
**proficient** 52:15 53:20  
**profit** 100:18 128:15,18  
**profitable** 51:9  
**profits** 37:21 94:12  
 98:12  
**program** 2:6 7:6 12:2,6  
 12:11,12,13 13:20,22

14:2 15:11 22:9 26:13  
 28:17,22 30:6 31:19  
 44:22 46:3 48:10 53:7  
 53:9 54:13 55:9 56:8  
 56:10 58:16 60:20  
 61:1,6,7,10 63:6,8,13  
 64:5,7 65:2 66:3  
 85:21 94:13 97:9 99:2  
 101:20 102:13 103:15  
 103:16 108:20 111:8  
 111:9 118:7 119:21  
 120:3 121:2,17 123:2  
 123:10 126:9 127:10  
 135:1,22 136:8,13,14  
 137:7 138:15 139:17  
 142:7 143:5,17 144:8  
 144:21 147:9,12,17  
 148:6,10,13,16 149:2  
 155:6 157:4,5,9  
 160:22  
**programmatic** 144:10  
**programming** 7:16 9:5  
 36:8 42:13,13 79:9  
 107:19 109:6 122:13  
 125:7 151:18 154:12  
**programs** 5:10,13 13:2  
 14:3 20:4 26:7 28:20  
 32:3,22 38:1 42:6,14  
 48:13 51:18 62:6 64:3  
 72:12,17 76:20 87:8  
 94:1,3 95:11 96:17  
 98:8 104:4 108:8,19  
 111:11,11 112:19  
 117:15 120:2,9,16  
 122:8 123:15 126:19  
 130:6,7 134:20 136:4  
 138:1,19 139:18  
 140:16 142:15 143:4  
 147:10 153:3,10  
 154:19 155:4,19  
 156:18 157:11 159:2  
 161:14 165:17 170:18  
 177:15  
**progress** 78:18 88:5  
 173:13  
**prohibitively** 127:5  
**project** 13:6 24:5,7,12  
 39:12 41:9 45:10 47:8  
 108:14 117:2 125:9  
 167:22 168:5  
**projects** 57:10  
**promote** 5:4 123:9  
**promoting** 166:13  
**prongs** 113:21  
**protects** 56:12  
**proud** 17:11 21:9 44:9  
 67:11  
**provide** 13:10 18:8,17

19:8 23:5 32:1 90:13  
 97:11 104:8 111:5  
 112:1 140:7 157:12  
 163:12 165:21  
**provided** 12:6,9 42:11  
 102:12 110:20  
**provider** 110:19 111:8  
**providers** 4:17 15:13  
 37:21 61:1 65:5 66:2  
 101:17 102:16 103:13  
 118:6 136:19 152:2  
 175:10  
**provides** 144:21  
**providing** 36:10 89:9  
 115:15 152:6 160:19  
 160:21 162:17  
**provision** 5:21 12:1  
**provisioned** 11:9,21  
**provisions** 8:17  
**PTA** 144:18  
**public** 2:3,7 6:13 11:17  
 15:15 22:10 23:22  
 24:1,19 29:1 42:6  
 44:8 45:3,13,20 46:2  
 60:18 67:21 70:20  
 98:4 101:15 104:21  
 110:3,5 116:2 128:20  
 135:9 140:18 149:17  
 157:22 163:17 165:10  
 177:15  
**public/private** 140:21  
**publicly** 70:20  
**Puerto** 133:19  
**pull** 41:17  
**pulled** 50:12  
**purposes** 126:5 167:17  
**pushing** 27:15,16,19  
**put** 7:5 25:13 26:4  
 37:13 67:3 68:3,12  
 70:17 72:10 81:15  
 84:12 101:11  
**putting** 7:22 16:6 49:1  
 60:20 67:7 150:7  
 156:18 167:15

---

**Q**


---

**qualified** 144:13  
**qualify** 61:2,15 166:2  
**quality** 109:6 126:15  
 173:5  
**quarantine** 10:4  
**Queens** 42:6  
**question** 25:18 26:4,12  
 28:6 31:7 32:22 35:19  
 44:4 47:16,22 48:3,16  
 48:20 50:6 52:1 54:16  
 62:15 66:18 82:5,6,17  
 96:10,16,21 100:7

115:5 127:14 133:4  
 141:8,12 142:22  
 160:6,8,8,12 161:5,10  
 161:12,19 164:11  
**questions** 6:14,15  
 25:14,17,22 26:1  
 53:21 83:1,2,5 92:22  
 105:8 113:2 114:22  
 119:12 120:11 166:17  
 175:7  
**quick** 14:5 19:14 31:6  
 83:5 106:10  
**quickly** 135:3 145:16  
**Quinsigamond** 164:2  
**quite** 106:18 110:13  
 121:20 123:18 127:2  
 158:8

---

**R**


---

**race** 6:2 8:20  
**racism** 42:20  
**Radhika** 176:22  
**radio** 40:14 133:16  
**radius** 37:18  
**rains** 41:13  
**raise** 96:13 103:13  
**raising** 146:10 158:22  
**Raleigh** 104:13  
**rallied** 15:16 133:18  
**ran** 45:1  
**range** 49:7 61:14 64:8  
**rapid** 49:14  
**rapidly** 50:11  
**rate** 61:3  
**rates** 57:17 58:4 127:2  
 135:13 136:1  
**reach** 63:9 95:11 97:1  
 97:21 109:5 115:21  
 119:15 121:9 122:15  
 122:17 123:19 131:16  
 145:11 151:4 153:11  
 154:3,22 155:1  
 159:22  
**reached** 63:7 100:18  
**reaching** 98:11 115:6  
 117:21 123:13 124:14  
 130:17  
**reactions** 136:7  
**read** 81:19 82:4 160:11  
**readiness** 3:6 5:9,11  
 18:21 91:19 92:6  
 96:19 100:9 160:14  
 160:22  
**ready** 91:9,9 110:1  
**real** 62:13 108:3 125:12  
 153:13  
**reality** 71:2  
**realize** 34:6

- realized** 33:9 43:13  
**realizing** 31:19 32:6  
**really** 14:7 23:15,15  
 24:13 25:6 27:15,19  
 28:2 31:21 34:1 41:21  
 43:1 45:21 46:5 47:3  
 47:9,14,18 52:9 53:3  
 53:3 54:2,14 55:16  
 56:4,6 58:5 64:18  
 65:11 66:4,8 70:22  
 73:2,16 75:2 79:5,20  
 81:5,9 92:6 94:5,17  
 96:9 97:12,16,20  
 100:4 101:18,18  
 105:11 111:2,4  
 114:15 116:4,9,13,14  
 116:22 117:1,6,20  
 118:7,14 122:13  
 125:2,15,18 127:9,22  
 132:9,15 134:10,14  
 135:19,22 136:11  
 137:7,18,22 139:22  
 141:13 143:8 146:11  
 147:4 150:12,14  
 153:1,8 156:13,19  
 159:7,11,13 160:2  
 161:16,19 163:18  
 164:21 167:3 169:5  
 171:17 172:6  
**reason** 88:8 146:18  
**Rebecca** 175:13  
**rebuilding** 171:9  
**rebuilt** 76:18 128:13  
**recall** 155:8  
**receipts** 89:1  
**receive** 46:1,11 170:7  
**received** 70:14,16  
**recertified** 61:14  
**recession** 78:10  
**rechartered** 5:17  
**recognize** 16:5 19:4  
 37:6 51:10,11  
**recognized** 145:15  
**recommendation** 9:2  
 55:14  
**recommendations** 5:20  
 8:16 18:8 101:12  
**record** 88:22 91:22  
 178:2  
**recording** 177:17  
**recovering** 80:7 112:3  
**recovery** 13:13 14:8  
 65:12,19 66:10  
**recruiting** 132:2,12  
**recruitment** 162:19  
**recurring** 60:5  
**reduced** 60:20  
**reeling** 129:2
- reflect** 132:14  
**reflecting** 143:7  
**reflection** 8:6  
**reflections** 8:11  
**reformat** 106:14  
**refrain** 64:15  
**refurbishment** 152:13  
**regard** 29:15 32:6 84:21  
**regarding** 26:9,14 33:2  
 96:18 100:8 158:22  
**Regents** 23:20  
**regionalize** 142:14  
**register** 73:8  
**regular** 116:5  
**regularly** 80:20  
**regulated** 157:1  
**regulatory** 2:10,11,11  
 95:1  
**reiterate** 83:21  
**related** 8:7 10:9 14:19  
 47:22  
**relation** 108:5  
**Relations** 2:11  
**relationship** 75:2  
**relationships** 43:8 56:5  
 65:10 74:9 77:5 80:14  
 81:4,11 108:22  
 140:18 164:19  
**relearned** 50:9  
**released** 55:6 101:10  
**relevant** 161:1  
**reliable** 35:8  
**relied** 140:19 145:11  
**relief** 11:6,8  
**religion** 6:3 8:20  
**rely** 133:22 143:2  
 151:10  
**relying** 130:7  
**remarks** 3:3,7 5:1 6:19  
 172:12  
**remember** 56:7 63:18  
 78:17,19 83:22 155:5  
**reminder** 93:10  
**remote** 13:11 44:20  
 45:19 46:13 68:2  
 69:14 100:15 135:16  
**remotely** 151:5  
**remove** 87:21  
**repair** 81:4  
**repeat** 105:17 153:13  
 161:6  
**repeated** 26:22  
**replicate** 168:8  
**report** 55:5 101:10  
**reports** 68:9  
**representative** 175:12  
**representatives** 137:4  
**represented** 45:8  
 131:17  
**Representing** 2:17  
**represents** 174:15  
**request** 82:3  
**requested** 27:11 45:22  
**require** 14:3 25:19  
**required** 147:18  
**requires** 125:3 163:13  
 163:14  
**requiring** 122:10  
**reruns** 59:14  
**Rescue** 13:4  
**research** 10:5 53:13  
 101:5 117:2 123:19  
**researcher** 107:12  
**reserve** 37:3 105:7  
**Residences** 153:19  
**residential** 11:18  
**residents** 50:3 63:21  
 90:14 106:22 131:9  
**resilience** 17:20  
**resilient** 18:2 65:13  
 66:11 76:12 91:4  
**resource** 114:6,8  
 144:16 162:3 163:1  
 163:17  
**resources** 46:15,17  
 51:2 52:9,18 67:7  
 68:3,11 81:8 85:8,9  
 87:19 89:5,7,8 104:10  
 104:18,19 109:5,19  
 111:3 117:11 126:14  
 126:20 129:16 131:6  
 134:3,6,12 139:11  
 140:22 143:15 144:9  
 152:4 155:22 156:7  
 166:11 168:4  
**respect** 30:15 31:20  
**respectful** 82:21  
**respects** 151:13  
**respondents** 54:9  
**responding** 80:6  
**response** 14:6 49:2,9  
 49:14 50:6 64:21  
 83:19 136:1 161:10  
**responses** 8:7 53:11  
 54:8 78:6 83:6 136:2  
**responsibility** 169:7  
**result** 31:15 68:10  
 72:17 90:17  
**resulted** 15:7  
**results** 38:19 107:13  
 158:8 162:5 170:22  
 171:11  
**resumed** 92:1  
**retire** 152:10  
**revealed** 100:22  
**review** 14:5
- revised** 165:18  
**revolution** 75:13  
**rewarding** 25:6  
**rich** 160:8  
**Rico** 133:20  
**right** 14:18 19:12,13  
 25:22 26:3 33:8 34:16  
 35:17 37:16 38:18  
 41:4 43:15 48:1,2  
 50:11,11 52:19 53:11  
 54:6,7 55:1,1,3 59:22  
 60:12 62:22 70:4  
 71:10 74:12,14 75:14  
 79:2,3 80:2 82:5  
 84:17 85:20 86:9 89:6  
 93:3 99:18 100:21  
 109:21 111:17 114:1  
 118:22 127:4 132:6  
 133:10 175:8 176:5  
**rights** 19:21 42:20  
**rigorous** 120:21  
**Riordan** 176:19  
**risk** 23:6  
**robin** 96:11  
**Robinson** 16:10 19:5  
 173:22  
**Robison** 174:22  
**ROI** 166:1  
**role** 9:4 51:7 56:4 66:8  
 84:7 85:12 93:6 95:8  
 95:17 113:3,7 144:6  
**roles** 152:15  
**rolled** 42:5 176:5  
**roots** 29:11 39:9  
**Roselle** 163:17  
**Rosenworcel** 5:18 7:10  
 17:4 91:5  
**round** 96:11  
**rounded** 173:7  
**roundtable** 1:8,14 4:8  
 5:8 6:7,11,13 7:13,15  
 9:3,7 15:1 91:17  
 162:4,13 174:15,21  
 175:3 176:12 177:2  
 177:16,17  
**Roundtables** 113:13  
**Roy** 21:13  
**rules** 92:11,17  
**rumors** 157:6  
**run** 51:8 85:18  
**running** 24:2 112:20  
**rural** 24:7 35:22 38:15  
 39:6 41:7 50:19 51:11  
 85:4 87:6 109:3  
 124:16,17,19 125:6,8  
 125:13,15 126:22  
 127:3,20 138:17  
 141:4 147:5

<b>S</b>		
<b>safe</b> 30:13	143:22 146:20 152:1	46:12,20,22 49:16
<b>Samoa</b> 129:11,15	156:2 157:22 159:21	50:2 93:22 96:6 116:5
<b>Sandy</b> 78:8	159:21,21 164:14,14	118:16 131:10 150:21
<b>Santa</b> 123:12	164:21 166:9,10	150:22 151:2 153:17
<b>Sarah</b> 2:8 16:11 18:22	167:7	157:2 173:11
92:3 100:10 105:8	<b>secure</b> 167:16	<b>servicing</b> 12:17 95:4
161:18 172:14 173:21	<b>Security</b> 11:7	117:8 123:8,14
175:1	<b>see</b> 10:17 35:1 37:14	130:22 169:5
<b>satellite</b> 41:10	56:18 64:8 70:21	<b>sessions</b> 80:17 113:15
<b>satisfied</b> 59:18	78:22 81:17 82:2,9,9	165:11
<b>Saurer</b> 176:20	95:22 112:7 136:14	<b>set</b> 9:6 39:19 46:10,14
<b>saw</b> 49:6 98:13 115:22	146:7 157:3	56:11 58:18 66:7 89:7
116:6,7,8 119:10	<b>seeing</b> 54:7 58:17	95:17 99:20 120:13
125:20 169:3	<b>seek</b> 15:4	125:3 159:7
<b>saying</b> 54:9 66:17 79:2	<b>seeking</b> 39:22	<b>sets</b> 158:2
105:17 136:20 147:3	<b>seen</b> 136:6 147:11	<b>setting</b> 19:17
160:15 169:16	150:18 169:7,21	<b>settings</b> 161:15
<b>says</b> 53:14	<b>segment</b> 122:4	<b>seven</b> 30:4
<b>scale</b> 5:12 48:6 52:3	<b>segue</b> 118:2	<b>severe</b> 134:4
58:8 59:2 100:5	<b>seismic</b> 10:12	<b>sex</b> 6:3 8:21
112:18 138:11 141:15	<b>Selecon</b> 174:22	<b>shape</b> 65:10 80:3
141:16,17 147:2,3	<b>select</b> 46:2	<b>share</b> 18:3,16 19:3 22:6
153:15,16 154:4	<b>self-sufficient</b> 133:19	23:16 24:14 28:8
159:3,4 160:15,16	<b>semi-autonomous</b>	31:16 35:13,19 70:6
161:22 167:18 172:1	129:8	91:6 94:14 133:6,7
173:17	<b>send</b> 36:18,18 82:13	134:16 137:15 139:14
<b>scaling</b> 141:19,19,20	<b>sending</b> 119:3	169:17 172:8
163:13 166:18,18	<b>senior</b> 1:21 20:14,19	<b>shared</b> 38:22 43:18
167:19	58:13 69:6 94:3	62:9 70:19 134:12
<b>scam</b> 143:5	105:21 138:16	144:11 150:13 165:17
<b>scene</b> 174:1	<b>seniorplanet.org</b> 94:3	166:9 172:4
<b>schedule</b> 7:7	<b>seniors</b> 45:13,20 58:17	<b>sharing</b> 25:15 71:15
<b>scheduling</b> 106:17	69:1,2,5 75:13 105:20	89:22 115:9 117:20
<b>Schmidt</b> 125:10	<b>sense</b> 83:17 86:8	130:14 133:3 134:3,7
<b>school</b> 2:7 9:15 10:19	158:18	148:19 174:6
22:10 32:4,4 35:7	<b>sent</b> 10:3 35:6	<b>shift</b> 10:12 119:10
36:11 37:2,5,15 44:17	<b>September</b> 114:7	<b>shined</b> 26:22
54:12 60:17 68:1	<b>series</b> 113:2,14 135:21	<b>short</b> 5:7 19:8
75:22 84:16 100:14	<b>servants</b> 44:9	<b>shortages</b> 28:14
100:16 103:11 104:19	<b>serve</b> 4:4 21:9 23:20	<b>Shortly</b> 4:17
110:11 135:9 143:17	29:16,16 43:9 84:6	<b>shout</b> 42:4 61:22
144:3,5 168:1 171:5	90:7 115:7 116:10,18	<b>shout-out</b> 163:15
<b>school-aged</b> 11:14	132:15 143:13 145:12	<b>shouting</b> 42:22
<b>schools</b> 10:2 13:9	151:5 158:10 165:2	<b>show</b> 43:4,7 59:13
22:15 31:22 51:6 68:4	166:8,13 173:20	158:7 170:22
72:18 78:20 100:13	<b>served</b> 42:8 101:22	<b>showed</b> 9:14 80:21
101:15 109:22 112:7	<b>servers</b> 40:4	<b>showing</b> 107:12
117:10 143:11 144:8	<b>service</b> 4:17 5:5 30:20	<b>shows</b> 14:7
149:17 163:17	36:8 37:21 40:8 42:8	<b>shut</b> 47:17 100:16
<b>second</b> 19:19 28:14	49:2 61:1,11 64:13	<b>shutdown</b> 10:3
32:5 45:9 56:2 85:9	65:7 78:20 90:21	<b>sic</b> 110:11
147:22	101:17 103:10,21	<b>side</b> 33:7,17 51:1
<b>Secondary</b> 144:5	136:19 137:3 138:21	118:19 119:22
<b>secondly</b> 153:13	152:2 172:7 175:10	<b>sign</b> 55:13 122:9
<b>sector</b> 67:19,20 74:4	<b>services</b> 2:12,13 4:19	136:18
83:8,14 90:2 114:13	5:22 8:18 11:16 12:20	<b>signed</b> 41:17
128:18,19,20 129:9	13:10 29:18 30:18	<b>signed</b> 11:20 13:15
	31:3 34:16 39:22 45:8	57:14,21 73:14 74:18
		118:20 121:14 132:8
		137:5
		<b>significant</b> 76:9,9 160:3
		<b>significantly</b> 88:6
		<b>signing</b> 85:15
		<b>Silicon</b> 1:20 17:11
		40:18
		<b>silver</b> 50:8
		<b>similar</b> 75:11 138:5
		<b>simple</b> 89:15
		<b>simplify</b> 87:22
		<b>simplifying</b> 87:22
		<b>simply</b> 171:16
		<b>Simpson</b> 37:2
		<b>single</b> 122:14 135:22
		136:3 149:18 155:16
		155:16
		<b>sit</b> 76:2 146:21
		<b>sites</b> 94:4 123:4
		<b>sits</b> 95:15
		<b>situated</b> 73:11
		<b>situation</b> 134:5
		<b>situations</b> 105:12
		146:14
		<b>six</b> 45:11
		<b>size</b> 129:20 142:2
		145:16
		<b>size-fits-all</b> 158:4
		<b>sizes</b> 49:18
		<b>skill</b> 158:2 159:7
		<b>skilling</b> 160:21 161:1
		<b>skills</b> 9:20 21:16 30:9
		55:11,12,20 67:16
		97:11 99:11 105:1,3
		115:15 116:19 131:22
		132:16 162:11 163:5
		164:5,20
		<b>skipped</b> 149:20
		<b>sky's</b> 146:18
		<b>skyrocket</b> 119:10
		<b>slashed</b> 79:3
		<b>sleeves</b> 176:5
		<b>slide</b> 11:4 14:10,11,21
		16:1
		<b>slides</b> 11:3
		<b>slow</b> 111:3
		<b>slows</b> 88:5
		<b>small</b> 34:5,12 37:2
		124:5 161:3
		<b>smartphone</b> 68:17
		<b>social</b> 39:22 69:4
		107:14,20 126:5
		132:11 168:2,2 169:7
		169:9 171:9,18,18
		<b>socially</b> 81:13
		<b>society</b> 18:2 91:4
		105:10 146:12 156:17
		171:5

**socioemotional** 112:11  
**solar** 39:19  
**solicitation** 49:14  
**solution** 145:17 158:4  
**solutioning** 158:3  
**solutions** 15:4 29:12  
 40:21 41:1 78:4,11,13  
 78:19 88:10 90:6,14  
 145:15 163:7 166:12  
 173:14 174:8  
**solve** 29:8 38:9 50:10  
 77:15 127:9  
**someone's** 53:2  
**somewhat** 83:5 88:18  
**Song** 2:14 95:3,4  
 111:21 142:19 161:9  
**Soo** 2:14 95:2,4 111:18  
 142:18 160:11 161:6  
**soon** 30:12 135:5  
**sorry** 51:21 127:17  
 157:11  
**sort** 28:8 31:14 55:19  
 66:16 71:13 98:5  
 101:3 108:2 132:10  
**sorts** 107:22  
**sound** 127:18  
**sounds** 43:16 81:20  
 148:18  
**sources** 38:8 166:2  
**Southeast** 53:18  
**Southern** 24:6 41:8  
**space** 112:13 161:4  
 168:14  
**spaces** 174:9  
**span** 45:10  
**Spanish** 122:19 136:15  
**Spanish-speaking**  
 137:1,3  
**spark** 171:13  
**speak** 25:18 26:20 39:5  
 56:16,17 67:10  
**speakers** 17:7 18:3,10  
 18:16 35:15 90:21  
**speaking** 79:11 136:22  
**special** 118:4 124:21  
 125:7 174:3  
**specific** 28:10 29:13  
 173:8  
**specifically** 14:12 16:8  
 72:9 114:9 115:18  
 117:12 118:8 131:3  
 152:2 160:20  
**specifics** 80:3  
**spectrum** 136:5  
**speechless** 79:13  
**speed** 29:17  
**speeds** 30:3,4 41:12  
**spend** 103:17

**spending** 113:6  
**spirit** 136:10 137:6,14  
**spoke** 80:13 133:16,17  
**spread** 49:17  
**spreading** 99:7 144:7  
**spurred** 101:13  
**square** 76:14  
**St** 58:13  
**staff** 2:11 22:5 151:14  
 152:7 163:3 175:22  
**stage** 9:6  
**stakeholders** 5:15  
 135:20 143:22 144:19  
 177:8  
**stand** 104:12  
**standardized** 61:7  
**standing** 157:10  
**start** 26:18 29:3 44:7  
 83:17,17 92:12 93:4  
 96:10,16 99:7 115:5  
 115:11 124:12 133:8  
 133:10 147:6 159:7  
 160:10,10  
**started** 10:2 22:13  
 26:17 29:22 93:3  
 97:22 108:7 140:13  
 155:11  
**starting** 9:7 19:9 106:8  
**starts** 88:11  
**state** 4:16 11:9 13:13  
 14:3 15:3,20 20:15,17  
 22:15,22 23:21 26:21  
 27:7,12,17 35:5,21  
 36:13 37:20 57:18  
 62:2,6 63:15 64:2,2  
 67:6,11 68:4 70:22  
 77:9 81:6 89:19 90:9  
 90:9 102:9 108:6  
 113:6 114:5,5 142:3  
 150:10 151:9 155:16  
 157:11,14 164:17  
 168:15 169:12 170:6  
**states** 1:1 6:1 8:19  
 11:22 14:3,12 15:19  
 20:3 51:19 57:17 66:8  
 70:12 75:18 87:15  
 96:6 127:8 142:11  
 153:20 157:12 165:6  
 165:9,14  
**statewide** 61:9  
**station** 40:14  
**stations** 39:19  
**statistics** 107:21  
**stature** 129:7  
**stay** 19:1 38:7 47:1 51:8  
 77:13 88:15 108:17  
 177:20  
**staying** 46:19,21

**step** 61:16,21  
**Stephan** 2:8 95:21,22  
 96:2 109:7 112:15  
 133:8 140:2 141:8,9  
 145:18 147:6 149:13  
**stepped** 28:19 49:10  
**Steve** 176:19  
**stewards** 39:17  
**stood** 104:5 117:6  
 130:18  
**stop** 92:20  
**stopped** 40:8 80:22  
**stories** 50:13 164:7  
**story** 42:16  
**strategic** 166:14 167:2  
 172:1  
**strategies** 5:3 113:21  
 114:1 116:16 133:5  
 162:14 163:9  
**strategy** 143:8 145:2  
**stream** 59:10  
**streamlining** 87:21  
**strengthen** 65:1  
**strengthened** 75:3  
**strengthening** 80:13  
**stress** 73:2  
**stressful** 170:13  
**strides** 27:5  
**strong** 66:10  
**stronger** 18:1 156:20  
**structural** 108:4  
**structure** 99:22  
**structures** 77:4  
**struggling** 127:3  
**Student** 166:4  
**students** 11:15 15:17  
 22:22 23:6,7,8,9  
 31:21 34:20 35:4  
 36:10,14,19 37:15,16  
 44:19 67:14,16 68:1,6  
 101:20 102:1,2 104:8  
 132:7 135:9 144:13  
 164:4 168:3  
**studies** 2:17 10:5  
 107:15 129:22  
**study** 107:11 129:12,13  
 135:14  
**stuff** 35:12 79:16 139:7  
 140:19 156:1  
**subject** 20:12  
**submit** 6:14 92:21  
**submitted** 70:21  
**subsidies** 48:11 50:17  
 160:20  
**subsidized** 97:7 110:20  
**subsidy** 50:21 52:21  
 108:19  
**subtracted** 124:4

**succeed** 9:21  
**Succeeds** 166:4  
**success** 164:6 177:15  
**successes** 8:11  
**successful** 5:3,13  
 48:11 86:22 100:2  
 121:18 158:6 168:8  
**successor** 48:9  
**sudden** 98:15  
**suffering** 110:16  
**sufficient** 159:1,15  
**summarized** 73:22  
**summit** 42:18 114:8  
**sun** 146:5  
**sung** 57:3  
**sunsets** 64:17  
**super** 140:10  
**super-helpful** 119:19  
**Superstorm** 78:8  
**supervise** 110:12  
**supplies** 110:1  
**support** 11:15 24:12  
 33:17 36:21 42:12,12  
 45:18 58:16 61:12,13  
 64:14 69:20 89:8  
 95:12 102:14 108:15  
 108:21 112:14 118:16  
 127:6 152:6 158:17  
 159:2 163:21 165:9  
 166:5 177:1  
**supported** 112:9  
 123:11 125:9 153:2  
 169:10  
**supporting** 108:19  
**supports** 114:21 125:4  
 162:18  
**supposed** 7:8 138:17  
**sure** 26:20 28:11 30:17  
 33:20 35:20 60:2  
 64:13,16,19 67:4 70:8  
 71:15 73:12 75:20  
 77:1,5 80:4 85:11,13  
 89:11,14 90:5,11  
 96:20 97:13,14  
 102:22 103:9 105:14  
 109:5 111:14,21  
 115:11 121:20 124:13  
 125:16 131:19 137:10  
 143:4 144:15,19  
 152:20 153:1,3,8,12  
 154:21 155:18 156:1  
 156:6,9 158:22 159:6  
 167:13 172:3  
**surface** 100:5  
**surreal** 36:18  
**surrounding** 39:6  
 131:14  
**survey** 53:11 54:8 55:7

107:22 136:3,15  
154:9  
**surveys** 108:10 135:21  
135:21 136:9  
**survival** 47:6  
**surviving** 80:6  
**Susan** 174:2  
**sustain** 150:15 155:19  
**sustainability** 50:16  
56:7 77:1 155:4  
**sustainable** 156:20  
162:4 166:12 171:14  
**sustainably** 112:18  
**sustaining** 170:16  
**systems** 32:4,4 60:18

## T

**T-Mobile** 33:19 45:7  
109:2  
**table** 26:4 115:2 167:6  
167:7,8  
**tablet** 45:22 46:7,11  
110:6,6  
**tablets** 37:12 45:17  
106:22 107:5,8 110:1  
110:9,12  
**tackle** 14:19  
**tackling** 162:1  
**take** 17:22 28:3 50:14  
50:14 76:18 77:7,8,9  
77:10,11,12 82:1,4,5  
82:12 86:7 88:14  
106:16 107:7 110:11  
114:17 146:7 150:22  
161:16 172:8 177:22  
**takes** 76:21,22 159:12  
159:12,15  
**talk** 10:22 39:8 44:3  
48:17,19 67:2 68:9  
103:1 111:21 113:18  
114:22 131:12 168:6  
**talked** 18:9 78:5 114:19  
156:2  
**talking** 9:8 48:15 52:1  
54:18 66:19 79:16  
80:18 83:18 118:3  
119:2 122:1,2 148:12  
**talks** 42:15  
**target** 123:18  
**targeted** 160:20  
**targeting** 14:12 131:7  
**tasked** 9:7  
**taught** 17:18 119:6  
**tax** 127:7  
**Taylor** 2:5 19:10 21:4,5  
26:18,20 56:16,21  
57:1 60:1,2 66:17  
67:4 70:11 89:14

**teach** 105:2 106:9  
121:4  
**teachers** 22:22 36:11  
36:15,17 37:14  
**teaching** 24:11 95:18  
106:4  
**team** 22:18 25:10,12,13  
82:5 95:1 123:19  
176:3,14,22  
**tech** 10:8 24:3 33:18  
39:10 45:18 54:22  
120:11 165:18 176:14  
**tech.ed.gov/deer** 114:9  
**tech.gov/stories** 164:9  
**technical** 36:21 84:2  
145:4 162:18  
**technology** 2:6,6,13,15  
12:19,20 21:12 22:9  
24:5 27:5 39:11,13  
41:3 43:3 44:13 45:2  
45:8 46:12 67:15  
93:21 94:1 95:6,15,18  
97:17 104:10 105:19  
106:6 112:7,10  
114:14,20 123:10,15  
124:6 132:20 153:5  
155:10,11 162:12  
163:21 166:1 171:2,3  
171:17  
**Teeniors** 75:12  
**teens** 75:12  
**telecommunication**  
22:14  
**telecommunications**  
44:13 140:11  
**telecoms** 156:3  
**telehealth** 11:16 13:2  
59:16  
**telemedicine** 128:8  
**television** 59:13  
**tell** 79:15 93:6 149:3  
**temporary** 12:1  
**ten** 37:18 42:14  
**tend** 126:6  
**Tennessee** 24:7 41:7  
**tens** 57:15 84:22 85:22  
154:3  
**term** 51:14 54:17 84:6  
87:12  
**terms** 28:14 29:20 30:5  
30:11 31:4 36:6 56:7  
73:6,11 84:18 86:20  
118:20 121:22 124:22  
124:22 126:14 151:20  
159:4 171:1  
**territories** 14:13 15:19  
129:11,17 173:7  
**territory** 64:2 110:5,17

129:1 142:5 148:17  
**Texas** 125:6  
**text** 119:3  
**texting** 119:17  
**thank** 6:8,16 7:3,20  
16:9,20 20:7,9,10  
21:1,6,21 22:4 23:10  
23:12,14 24:14,15  
25:3,8,9 28:4,7 32:19  
35:20 43:19 50:4 55:3  
59:20 63:5 67:5 71:3  
73:15 75:8 77:17 87:1  
89:12 90:14,19 91:5,8  
91:10,11,19,20 92:14  
93:9 94:15 96:20  
100:10 102:21 105:8  
105:9 109:11 117:20  
127:12 130:13,15  
133:3 147:8 149:10  
152:18 156:22 158:19  
158:20 160:5 161:12  
166:16 170:9 171:20  
172:5,6,10,13,14  
173:19 174:2,4,10,12  
174:13,17,19 175:3,5  
175:8,15,20 176:6,7,9  
176:13,13,14 177:14  
177:22  
**thanking** 92:12  
**thanks** 7:22 21:6,13  
39:2 55:4 67:4 73:21  
74:2 91:7 93:8 94:16  
95:20 132:20 175:21  
176:20  
**theme** 25:20 55:16 60:5  
130:16  
**they'd** 169:16  
**thing** 34:19 35:16 38:17  
49:5 56:2 99:9 110:21  
111:2,4 117:5 124:16  
131:19 137:19 140:5  
142:12 149:1 155:3  
165:15 170:14  
**things** 31:7 34:18 35:10  
35:14 38:13 41:13  
42:17 43:17,21 46:6  
48:8 59:3,17 62:1,16  
68:20 69:4 71:16  
78:15,18 80:11 83:19  
86:19 90:9 97:5,20  
106:19 110:18 113:19  
115:1 116:8 119:1  
122:7 127:7,18,19,22  
129:5 130:18 132:22  
134:10,16 141:21  
142:8 148:1 149:13  
154:5 165:20 168:12  
171:10

**think** 31:8 32:13 40:22  
47:4,9 49:5,20 50:1  
51:22 52:7 53:5 55:11  
57:4 60:7 61:4 63:11  
63:18 64:8 65:11,13  
66:8 71:17 74:1,8,11  
80:1,12 84:2,5 89:6  
92:8 100:4 105:9,14  
112:11 117:6 119:6  
130:17 132:22 134:19  
134:21 136:6 137:6  
137:17 142:7,15  
145:7,12 146:11  
147:9 149:12,13,22  
150:8 151:6 152:1  
153:13 156:12 157:6  
157:19 158:4,7,11  
159:2,4,9,11,18 160:2  
160:9 164:21 165:16  
166:19,22 167:5,16  
168:14,18 169:1,5,21  
170:1 171:18  
**thinking** 62:15 64:18  
65:18 105:15 113:2  
169:11,12  
**third** 57:13 65:12 133:4  
**Thomas** 2:13 93:16  
105:12 121:20 127:13  
137:14 141:12 147:3  
152:18 158:21 167:2  
170:10  
**thought** 41:3 139:18  
146:1  
**thoughts** 160:9  
**thousand** 42:14  
**thousands** 42:10 154:3  
159:4,22  
**three** 6:4 35:15 39:5  
46:4,9 71:9 76:21  
100:12 102:1 103:5,7  
110:6 113:19 151:18  
155:21 158:9 173:15  
**thrive** 51:17  
**throttling** 111:1  
**thrust** 129:6  
**Thu** 2:4 19:18 32:20  
51:20 68:21 73:19  
87:3 88:20  
**thumbs** 158:21  
**THURSDAY** 1:10  
**tied** 55:10  
**time** 8:2 10:6 25:10  
38:6 43:15 44:10  
45:12 46:6 47:2,7  
49:16 76:18,22 82:18  
86:9 87:10,10 88:12  
90:18 91:8 93:20  
106:21 108:1 110:11

112:13 115:19 117:12  
 127:7 153:5 154:5  
 155:4 159:1,12  
 160:19 165:1 170:18  
 171:21 172:6 177:9  
**timelines** 150:13  
**times** 30:4 42:16  
 136:16,18  
**timing** 110:8  
**tireless** 174:19  
**today** 8:3,5 15:1 16:2  
 17:8,12 18:3,16 21:2  
 23:14 25:8,15,16 29:3  
 90:22 92:16 93:14  
 94:6,14 133:12 159:8  
 171:22 172:7,17  
 174:5 175:8  
**today's** 4:8 6:7 9:7  
 16:12 174:15,21  
 175:2 176:12 177:2  
 177:16  
**Tom** 47:4 93:20  
**ton** 135:8  
**tool** 166:8,13  
**tools** 13:10 24:11 66:7  
 66:9 97:13 159:16  
 162:9  
**top** 27:3 73:17 76:2  
 78:5 101:2 127:21  
 130:12 142:21 155:6  
**topic** 18:5 91:7 114:10  
**totally** 70:17  
**touch** 46:8,19,21 80:20  
**touched** 80:1 166:19  
 169:2  
**town** 165:11  
**towns** 141:4  
**tracing** 118:15  
**track** 7:7 88:19 90:8  
**traditionally** 101:3  
**train** 116:21 130:20  
 131:3 139:5 151:1  
**train-the** 167:20  
**trained** 39:16 98:21  
 132:19 151:18 168:2  
**trainer** 130:21 131:3  
 167:21  
**trainers** 138:13  
**training** 30:9 45:19  
 46:13,15 79:8 97:12  
 98:10,17,19 99:5,21  
 100:1 102:14 105:19  
 106:6 107:3,6 115:15  
 123:2 126:15,19  
 130:21 131:8,11,20  
 139:13 159:14 163:4  
 163:19 170:18  
**trainings** 98:1 99:11,16

130:20,21 132:1,3  
 152:8  
**transform** 8:10 95:18  
**transition** 44:17  
**translated** 122:19  
**translation** 31:3  
**transparency** 148:19  
**Transportation** 27:18  
 60:15  
**Treasury** 66:5 76:6  
**tremendous** 16:7 110:7  
**tremendously** 76:7  
 88:5  
**trend** 126:10  
**tribal** 11:10 12:8,16  
 13:1 14:13 23:1 35:22  
 50:19 51:12 87:6  
**tried** 65:16  
**trigger** 14:8  
**triggered** 11:2  
**trillion** 11:6  
**trip** 146:8  
**trouble** 126:8  
**true** 25:2  
**truly** 86:22 119:13  
**trust** 73:4 84:7 86:18  
 115:19 118:21 121:16  
 121:19  
**trusted** 43:8 51:5 55:15  
 56:5 73:10 74:5 77:11  
 85:16 117:9,18  
 118:17 142:22 143:3  
 143:9,13 144:1,16,17  
 145:3,9 162:20  
 164:19 173:16  
**trustworthiness** 56:12  
**try** 48:16 82:3 83:4  
 105:17 158:9 161:9  
**trying** 38:16 90:7 99:18  
 108:16 109:4 112:1  
 129:6,7 130:5 148:1  
 165:9,22  
**turn** 77:22 87:11 100:6  
 102:19 120:12 172:11  
 174:11  
**Turner** 174:3  
**Turning** 133:13  
**twenty-mile** 37:18  
**two** 5:8 16:4 18:20  
 44:20 46:9 61:21 63:9  
 71:8 80:13 82:22 83:2  
 83:5 91:9,18 92:4,5  
 92:21 123:22 130:17  
 132:22 139:19 147:14  
 148:5 150:22 154:5  
 155:21 163:16 165:20  
 166:17 173:14  
**type** 38:19 47:22 61:11

61:16 62:21 66:21  
 68:11,14 144:10  
**types** 41:2 72:12 81:3  
 112:14,17 120:15  
 135:13,14 165:16  
**typically** 151:12  
**Tyson** 7:4 176:1

---

**U**


---

**U.S** 2:14 14:13 95:6  
**UA** 36:8  
**ubiquitous** 29:20  
**UCLA** 107:21  
**ultimately** 81:9 101:13  
 150:6  
**umbrella** 39:12  
**unaware** 55:9  
**unboxing** 107:5  
**uncovering** 173:8  
**underestimate** 117:17  
**underscored** 173:4  
**underserved** 172:20  
**understaffed** 88:7  
**understand** 63:3 68:22  
 90:11 175:19  
**understanding** 55:21  
 60:12 68:13 74:20  
**underway** 164:16  
**unemployed** 12:3  
**unfolded** 97:20  
**unique** 42:9 118:4  
 128:1  
**United** 1:1 6:1 8:19  
 11:22  
**Universal** 36:7  
**universities** 12:15,16  
 167:21  
**University** 58:9 107:12  
 168:1  
**unmute** 47:13 51:22  
 93:7  
**unprecedented** 17:16  
 57:8  
**unprepared** 36:16  
**unserved** 41:9 172:20  
**UPS** 46:4,5  
**upscaling** 177:12  
**upsell** 148:12  
**upstate** 106:1 125:5  
**upsurging** 14:11  
**upwards** 117:14  
**urban** 39:6 41:6 50:20  
 98:3 126:1,21  
**urgency** 86:8  
**urgent** 159:5  
**usage** 136:7  
**use** 7:12 31:18 41:17  
 52:21 54:17 60:17

68:7 72:2 74:21 76:10  
 96:5 107:8 110:12  
 114:20 120:4 123:9  
 130:5 140:4 166:5,14  
 172:9  
**users** 42:9 134:21  
**uses** 137:8,21  
**utilities** 170:1  
**utility** 88:2  
**utilize** 38:7 97:15  
**utilizing** 54:1,2

---

**V**


---

**vaccinated** 73:6  
**vaccine** 131:9  
**valuable** 17:19  
**value** 87:18 171:18  
**variables** 123:22  
**variety** 20:4 49:18  
**various** 115:17 117:18  
 167:3,12  
**vary** 57:17  
**vendor** 45:6  
**verification** 149:20  
**Verizon** 33:19 175:14  
**Vice** 1:19,21 2:2,3 4:18  
 6:21 20:15 24:19  
**Vickie** 16:10 19:4  
 173:22 174:22  
**video** 58:19  
**videochat** 30:21  
**Videoconference** 1:14  
**videotape** 91:14  
**view** 109:8  
**viewed** 10:12  
**viNGN** 2:9 111:7 129:5  
**Viorica** 2:6 19:10 22:2,3  
 22:8 35:20 43:11 50:7  
 75:8 87:4  
**Virgin** 2:8 96:3,5 109:9  
 109:14 111:4 127:20  
 128:1 129:10,13  
 130:4 141:22 142:13  
 146:8 147:5 169:16  
**virtual** 42:12,13,14,18  
 90:21 99:11 109:22  
 176:17  
**virtual/hybrid** 132:4  
**virtually** 99:16 100:1  
 132:21  
**virus** 42:21  
**vision** 95:17  
**visit** 177:18,20  
**visiting** 58:13  
**vistas** 36:2  
**visual** 34:6  
**vitality** 49:6  
**voice** 26:6 43:21

**voices** 73:10 74:5

167:14

**vote** 52:5 53:3 73:8,8**voucher** 147:21**vulnerable** 45:12

---

**W**

---

**wait** 136:16,18**wall** 37:16**Walmart** 35:2**want** 7:9 16:5 18:11

19:4 25:11 26:6 30:16

35:13 36:6 39:8 43:15

43:21 44:6,11,21

47:20 48:18 55:13,17

56:2,9,15 62:17 63:5

64:10,11 66:4,17,18

67:5,10 73:2 75:21

77:21 78:17,17 79:21

81:15 84:12 89:1,3

90:19 91:12 92:11,12

92:14 96:12 105:12

111:19 125:15 127:13

135:15 137:15 140:14

142:20 143:8 146:7

147:16,17 149:3,4,4

153:11 158:20 159:5

159:18,22 163:15

171:21 174:1 176:13

**wanted** 26:4 41:7 42:4

46:3 55:5 61:22 78:3

81:5 82:17 119:5

130:16 135:13 145:1

**wants** 48:17,19 67:2

83:16

**Washington** 35:5**wasn't** 33:16 44:1 99:17

126:13 133:20,21

143:5

**watching** 59:14 92:7

157:12

**water** 170:1**way** 8:22 31:4,9 40:3

50:10 51:16 53:3

54:12 56:12 66:9 70:3

82:7 92:21 131:15

132:14 137:12 151:6

152:10 158:17 160:3

160:3,6 176:2

**ways** 64:9 114:20

116:17 119:16 127:10

136:10 155:1

**we'll** 22:1 26:18 29:5

38:22 62:17,19 71:6

72:4,22 73:20 77:22

83:2,4 88:15 91:18

111:16 141:9,9

160:10 164:10

**we're** 7:8 14:22 18:11

19:1,3 21:15 25:14,17

28:19 35:12,17 38:16

43:19 52:14 53:10

54:7 59:21 61:8 62:4

62:11 65:15,17 66:1

66:19 69:17 70:4,17

70:22 71:13,15,16

73:10 74:2 75:4,6,14

77:15,20 82:17 83:16

86:4 87:2 88:18,20

90:7 91:16 92:8 93:4

93:12 96:4 97:12

100:17 102:6 108:16

109:4,15,17 110:15

110:19 111:9,12,14

112:1,22 115:1

116:20,21 123:11,12

123:13,17 124:13

125:16 128:9 129:2,3

129:7,8,18 130:7

131:20 132:4 133:11

139:16,19,20 147:14

148:1,8,11 154:9

156:3 157:12 158:1

159:13 160:7,15

164:6,8 165:9,22

170:22 172:8

**we've** 25:11 28:15

29:21 30:4 32:11 63:7

64:19 71:17 72:5,10

72:17 75:2 98:21

102:2,12 105:20,21

108:21 111:7 120:6

120:16 123:3 124:10

125:5 135:21 136:1,3

136:4,6 138:1,11,12

147:15 150:16 163:9

169:19 170:19,20

171:21

**wears** 176:8**web** 177:18,20**website** 91:15**week** 44:21 69:5 80:21

99:4 107:8

**weeks** 45:11 106:15**Welcome** 4:8 7:15

16:19

**welcomes** 16:2,4**wellbeing** 107:20**Wellington** 10:14**went** 34:22 43:16 76:13

91:22 100:15 109:22

123:3 133:6 137:16

137:17 139:13 168:4

178:2

**weren't** 33:13 68:7

128:17

**west** 88:3**western** 35:21 51:19

75:18

**Wi-Fi** 11:17 15:16 32:14

37:10 39:9,15 41:19

42:1,7 76:1 104:9

**wide** 20:4 153:3**widespread** 65:13**wildfire** 76:14**wildfires** 80:11**Williams** 175:12**willing** 70:8**window** 146:7**winds** 41:15**wins** 15:7**wiped** 128:5**Wireless** 175:9**Wireline** 176:1,11**wish** 109:12**wonderful** 36:2 39:3

75:9 91:13,13 95:10

**wondering** 109:8 148:4**wonders** 87:11**Woods** 2:15 94:8,9,10

100:10 118:2 134:18

149:12 168:11

**woodwork** 140:13**word** 6:16 60:16,19

99:8 131:9,21 137:21

159:13 165:10 170:10

**words** 10:13**work** 15:6,13 20:5

23:10 26:8 33:10,17

37:10,11 38:17 39:3

44:12 50:5 51:4 52:5

54:12 57:22 59:2

67:13 68:2 74:16 77:6

81:10 83:9,11,15

84:19 85:18 86:2 88:9

90:12,16 92:15 94:21

97:19 98:3,14 103:11

105:15 106:18 109:3

115:13,18 116:15

117:17 119:1 120:18

122:7 124:10,16,21

126:5,16 135:22

138:6 139:1,22

140:21 141:2 146:21

148:1 150:17 151:12

152:12,22 153:16,22

154:7 156:18 161:15

161:16 168:2,2

169:14 171:12 173:20

174:1,16 176:6,12

177:13

**worked** 22:15 27:16

28:12 33:18 40:18

44:14 45:6 71:20 75:3

94:12 99:13 108:12

108:13 109:10 115:6

115:12 123:6 133:5,9

133:14 134:10,14,17

141:5 144:2 155:5,9

170:20

**worker** 40:15**workers** 9:19 46:5

131:8

**workforce** 121:5**working** 1:5 2:16 6:4,6

6:9 7:21 16:3,6,9 24:4

25:11 32:4 40:16

44:16 58:2,3 60:15,17

61:10 65:3 69:22

70:12,17 76:4 77:5

85:15 86:21 91:1

93:13 98:4 108:21

110:10 111:10 115:16

120:19 123:11 125:5

125:14 138:1 163:13

163:14 172:16,17,22

174:14,16

**works** 55:21 58:8 72:21

72:22 138:7,8 156:1

173:18

**workshop** 34:11 177:3**workshops** 105:1**workstream** 16:15 19:6

25:12 173:20 174:20

175:6

**world** 10:5 35:17**worry** 151:6**wouldn't** 21:22 124:14

146:14

**wow** 94:7 102:18

166:16

**wrap** 60:2 83:2 89:15**wraparound** 112:14**wrenching** 37:14**wrong** 51:1**www.FCC.gov** 91:15**www.fcc.gov/commu...**

177:19

---

**X**

---

**Xfinity** 30:22

---

**Y**

---

**yeah** 95:22 130:15

133:11 134:18 137:17

141:11 142:19 145:7

146:3 148:11,22

149:10 161:9 166:22

**year** 29:6 42:9 58:12

59:4 70:13 86:6

100:11 114:7 122:15

123:2,14 128:21

135:22 136:3 139:19  
 139:20 148:5  
**year-old** 59:8  
**years** 22:13 27:4 63:18  
 72:7 76:22 77:3 93:14  
 98:22 100:12 103:7  
 128:2 148:5 151:18  
 155:5,13,13,21 158:9  
**yellow** 84:14  
**YMCA** 120:9  
**York** 20:17,20,22 23:21  
 24:1,3 39:10 43:22  
 44:3,8 45:2 49:14  
 63:8,13,19 78:9 81:6  
 105:22 106:1,22  
 107:1 125:6,10  
 132:19  
**young** 59:11 124:5  
 176:6  
**younger** 124:3 126:4,22  
**youth** 40:15 74:10,12  
 74:12

---

**Z**


---

**zones** 28:22 32:6,12  
 93:20  
**Zoom** 106:10  
**Zumba** 42:16

---

**0**


---



---

**1**


---

**1** 3:4 29:5  
**1,000** 138:9  
**1,200** 32:12  
**1,250** 32:13  
**1.2** 63:7  
**1.3** 9:19 60:9,12  
**1:06** 178:2  
**10** 77:3 106:15 120:19  
 155:13  
**10-week** 106:16 120:20  
 123:1  
**10,000** 45:19 106:22  
 138:9  
**10:00** 1:14 4:2  
**100** 106:5  
**100,000** 101:22 138:9  
**11:25** 5:8  
**11:36** 91:22  
**11:45** 91:18 92:1  
**12** 110:15,15 120:20  
 160:7  
**13** 36:3  
**13th** 100:13  
**14** 54:8  
**15** 39:15 155:13  
**16** 3:5 15:9

**16.5** 9:14  
**17** 57:14  
**172** 3:7  
**18** 124:3 177:7  
**1994** 155:7

---

**2**

---

**2** 3:6 142:22  
**2.7** 29:4  
**20** 77:3  
**200** 100:19 139:19  
**2000** 22:16  
**2004** 105:20  
**2010** 77:14  
**2011** 30:1  
**2014** 22:16 36:9  
**2015** 20:18  
**2017** 129:3  
**2018** 27:9,9  
**2019** 30:19  
**2020** 9:10,22 11:5,21  
 20:18 29:3 36:18 42:9  
 52:6 100:13  
**2021** 5:18 11:20 12:22  
 13:3,17 23:5 102:8  
 103:18  
**2022** 29:3  
**2023** 1:11 103:18  
 164:10  
**23** 1:11  
**24** 20:2  
**24-hour** 42:17  
**240** 31:3  
**25** 22:13 42:7  
**27** 57:20  
**289** 37:3

---

**3**

---

**3** 19:6 25:12 174:20  
 175:6  
**3,000** 109:15  
**30** 101:15  
**30,000** 102:13  
**300** 98:21 139:21  
**300,000** 44:8  
**35%** 122:21  
**380,000** 122:16

---

**4**

---

**4** 3:2  
**45** 99:6  
**46** 10:6  
**47** 58:1

---

**5**

---

**5** 3:3  
**5,000** 54:8 136:2  
**50** 15:19 20:2 104:15

108:6 139:18  
**500** 76:14 138:12  
**500,000** 42:9

---

**6**

---

**60** 106:12  
**60%** 117:14  
**60,000** 101:22 136:2  
**64** 124:3  
**65%** 117:8

---

**7**

---

**7,000** 53:11  
**700,000** 60:8,13

---

**8**

---

**87,000** 148:8

---

**9**

---