

At The STEM Alliance, we provide wraparound digital equity services including connecting clients to free or low-cost internet solutions, providing tech skills education, and distributing internet-ready devices to provide low-income, high-needs clients with the tools they need to connect to our digital world.

In Westchester County alone, there are 75,000 households without computers. Through The STEM Alliance's work with thousands of clients across Westchester County, we have found that a majority of them have either little or no tech skills training. Lack of access to technology and tech skills training also prevents our citizens from equitable access to telehealth and the use of digital patient portals. Health equity is the opportunity for everyone to receive the health care they need and deserve, regardless of social or economic status. Providing health equity in telehealth means changing digital literacy, and technology so that all patients have equal access to quality health care ([HHS.gov](https://www.hhs.gov)). Without funding for internet, tech skills training, and devices, this equity will not be achieved.

Despite the creation of the ConnectALL office and a stated priority of connecting New York's citizens to broadband, the crucial aspect of digital equity has been completely left off the table. New Yorkers will be woefully behind in our increasingly digitally-dependent world without a solution to truly connect our citizens - not just through internet access but through the skills and tools to use it. We can't wait for federal funds to be distributed. Digital equity needs a place in the state budget now.

Thank you.

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Creating a network of STEM learning opportunities

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