



WCA, STEM ALLIANCE GROW DIGITAL ECONOMY WITH CONNECT WESTCHESTER

The WCA's efforts to bring the benefits of broadband to households throughout Westchester have just expanded! Spurred by a need to help employers fill job openings, healthcare providers expand telemedicine, banks promote secure e-deposits—all while addressing the digital divide in Westchester—The STEM Alliance, with the support of the WCA, has secured a \$750K grant to launch Connect Westchester.

Y-Zone Driving Economic Impact

A nationally recognized pilot project program providing free internet access, device ownership and digital literacy to downtown Yonkers residents during the pandemic, the Y-Zone expanded citywide late last year and has, to date, served over 400 Yonkers residents.

Y-Zone's Digital Navigator Program, the first ever in Westchester, is improving the ability of residents to participate in workforce development, access healthcare, become banked individuals, and connect to the new economy. This WCA initiative creates an annual economic impact of \$1.2 million by bringing new digitally literate consumers and job seekers to our banks, hospitals, schools, and businesses.

"Digital equity and inclusion work as a driver of economic success not just for individuals, but the County as a whole," said Margaret Käufer, president, The STEM Alliance.



"Working in partnership with WCA, elected officials and other nonprofits, The STEM Alliance has been able to show that wraparound digital equity solutions triple an individual's comfort level on basic workforce platforms. Investments in workforce development and re-skilling must first start with digital equity for all."

We've connected hundreds of people to the internet and our regional economy.

Connect Westchester is an extension of the WCA's successful Y-Zone program in partnership with the STEM Alliance, City of Yonkers and community and business partners. The project will reach an additional 250 people across Westchester and facilitate countless more households to take advantage of the federal Affordable Connectivity Program offered by internet providers.

"We've connected hundreds of people to the internet and our regional economy," explained Chris Fisher at City & State's recent Broadband for All conference. Fisher, a partner at Cuddy & Feder and vice chair, WCA, has been instrumental in leading the WCA's digital connectivity initiatives. "These projects connect the unconnected to better healthcare, education, and employment and provide a digital pipeline to our county's biggest employers, service providers and the internet economy."



Join the WCA's Digital Connectivity committee, chaired by Robyn White, director, external affairs, AT&T.

Visit Westchester.org/initiative/digital to learn more.

BOLSTERING VITAL HEALTHCARE SECTOR, WCA WORKS TO GET MORE NURSES ON THE FRONT LINES

New York's nursing shortage, magnified by the global pandemic, is worsening and may not ease for years. The state is projected to face a shortage of almost 40,000 nurses by 2030, leaving current nurses overworked and patients potentially impacted by inadequate staffing. Nursing programs in Westchester and across the state are working toward educating the next generation of nurses to resolve the shortage, but they face a major challenge: a lack of clinical sites in which students can complete training hours required to be licensed.

Nursing Simulation Labs to Ease Critical Shortage

But that may soon change. A new bill in New York State would allow nursing students to substitute up to 30 percent of their required clinical training with "high-quality simulation education." The WCA has been a fierce advocate in support of the bill, now passed in the State Senate and Assembly and awaiting Gov. Hochul's signature.

"This is great news," said Debra Simons, PhD, RN, Dean of Nursing & Health Sciences at Manhattanville College. "Simulation labs provide students with opportunities to build confidence in dealing with high-pressure situations, learn from mistakes in a safe, supportive environment, and gain experiences with a variety of conditions—boosting their confidence for when they officially enter the nursing workforce."



"We appreciate the support and collaboration of the WCA, which advocated for this bill and brought together area hospitals and educational institutions to help solve the nursing shortage," added Simons.

Keeping Westchester's vital healthcare sector staffed with a robust pipeline of talent is critical to keeping the regional economy strong, according to Amy Allen, WCA vice president. "This bill matters not only because it supports a major economic sector in Westchester, but also because it impacts how all of us receive healthcare when we need it. And that's something we can all get behind."

SAVE THE DATE



**Elizabeth Haub School of Law
at Pace University
78 North Broadway, White Plains**

Thursday, June 1, 2023



WESTCHESTER COUNTY ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

'23 REAL ESTATE CONFERENCE

DEBATE NEW YORK'S HOT BUTTON HOUSING CRISIS
LEARN ABOUT LAND USE & ZONING SOLUTIONS
GET AN INSIDER'S LOOK AT THE COUNTY'S MAJOR ADAPTIVE REUSE PROJECTS
NETWORK WITH REAL ESTATE MOVERS AND SHAKERS

Wednesday, May 10 4:00-7:30pm
Westchester Country Club, Rye
Register today at westchester.org

DYNAMITE KEYNOTE



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RXR

CROSSFIRE: HOUSING DEBATE



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