

# Expanding Tech Goes Home Digital Inclusion Programs into Essex County

For more than two decades, Tech Goes Home (TGH) has been working to expand digital inclusion for individuals and families in Greater Boston and beyond. In 2021, with the support of the Essex County Community Foundation (ECCF), TGH launched a pilot expansion of our programs into several communities in Essex County. We are excited to share the remarkable success of this pilot, which can serve as a model for additional, large-scale geographic expansion.

## About Tech Goes Home

TGH is a nonprofit dedicated to advancing digital equity. Working in partnership with schools, healthcare providers, and community organizations, TGH opens up access to digital devices, internet connectivity, and digital skills training to support individuals and families so they can pursue economic opportunity, thrive academically, access critical resources, and engage with their community and loved ones. You can learn more about TGH's work, and ways to become involved, at [techgoeshome.org](https://techgoeshome.org).

### Formula for Impact

#### **Computers**

A new iPad or Chromebook to use at home



#### **Connectivity**

Stable, affordable internet covered by TGH



#### **Training**

15 hours of culturally responsive digital skills training



#### **Digital Inclusion**

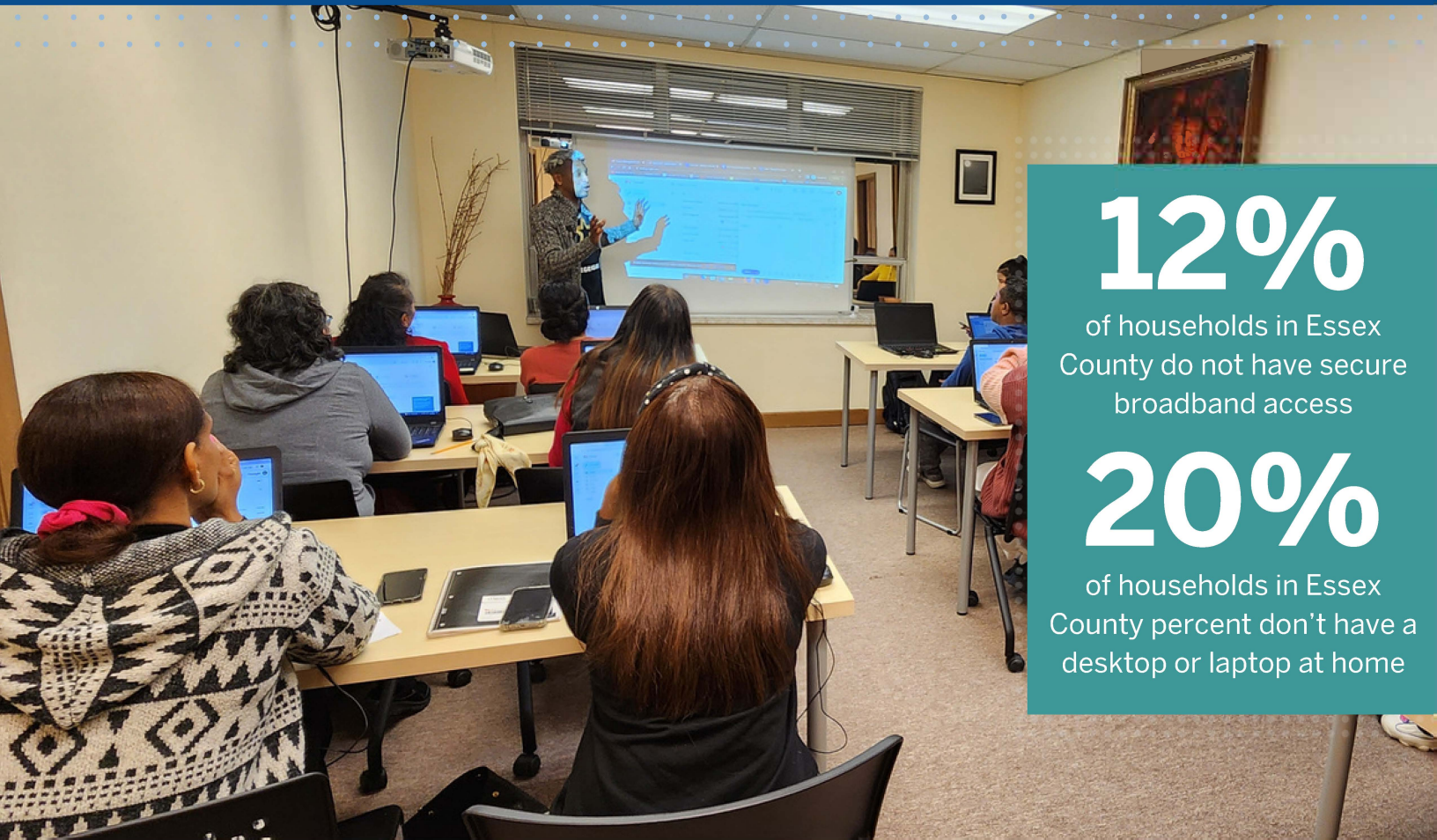
Lasting access to the digital world and the opportunities and resources it offers

# A Snapshot of the Digital Divide in Essex County

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Located in the northeast corner of Massachusetts, Essex County is comprised of more than 30 cities and towns — bordered by New Hampshire to the north and the Atlantic Ocean to the east — and is home to more than 800,000 residents.

More than 12 percent of households in Essex County do not have secure broadband access, and 20 percent don't have a desktop or laptop at home. Communities of color and low-income communities — in Essex County and across the country — face disproportionate rates of digital exclusion. In Essex County, 90 percent of the neighborhoods with the lowest rates of broadband and computer access are in Lynn and Lawrence. These two cities are home to more residents of color and low-income residents per capita than the county as a whole. TGH intentionally emphasizes the expansion of programming in communities most affected by the structural injustices at the root of digital exclusion, and we work to activate the power within our partner communities to help close the digital divide.



**12%**

of households in Essex County do not have secure broadband access

**20%**

of households in Essex County percent don't have a desktop or laptop at home

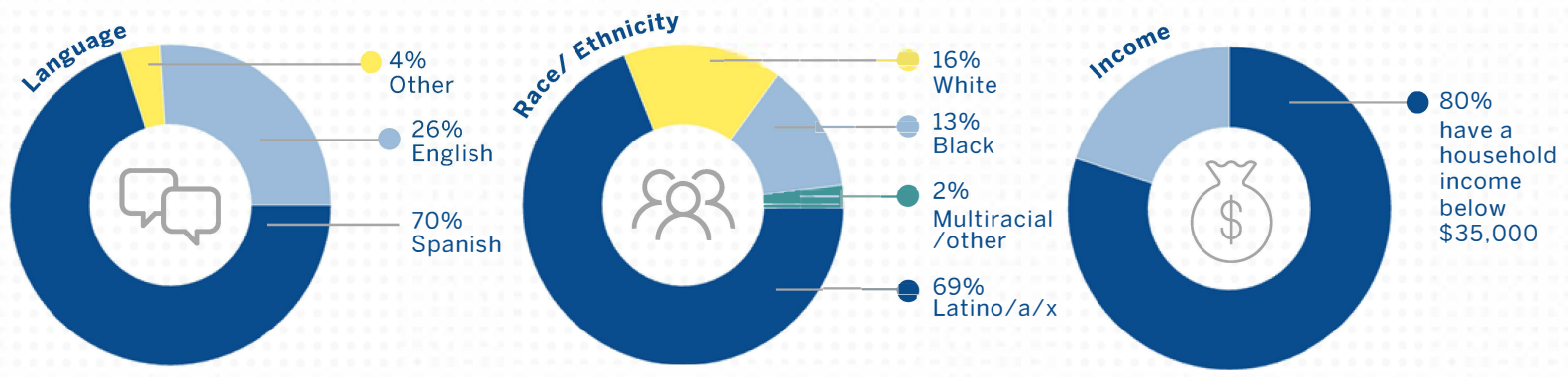


# Piloting Tech Goes Home Programming in Essex County

TGH first began offering digital inclusion programming in the City of Boston more than 20 years ago. Over the past several years, TGH has steadily expanded its reach throughout the Boston area — but, we know digital inequity is a systemic issue across the Commonwealth and further expansion is essential to meet the demand for digital access.

In June of 2021, TGH and ECCF launched a partnership to make TGH’s proven and impactful programming available to residents of Essex County. ECCF is providing three years of foundational philanthropic support to enable TGH to expand into seven municipalities across the county, including six Gateway Cities. The partnership began with a pilot of 50 households across five program sites in five municipalities. When the pilot concluded in May of 2022, more than 100 learners had completed the program, and our data shows significant impact.

## Learners Who Took Part in TGH Essex County Pilot



# Our Impact

**5** Program Sites across Essex County

## Pilot Program Sites

Lawrence CommunityWorks  
MakeIT Haverhill  
North Shore CDC  
Latino Support Network  
Wellspring House

## Program Highlights

**100%**

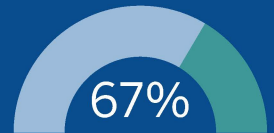
of graduates report learning skills that can improve their lives.

**94%**

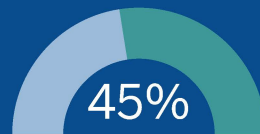
of graduates report that they already have or plan to get home internet access, compared to 73% who had internet at the time of their enrollment.



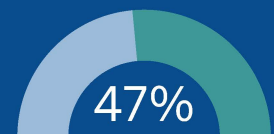
of grads report they are more likely to use the internet for educational purposes



of grads report they are more likely to use the internet communicating with others



of grads report they are more likely to use the internet for health and wellness



of grads report they are more likely to use the internet for job resources

$\frac{1}{3}$  of courses were taught entirely in Spanish,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of courses taught bilingually in English and Spanish

# Scaling the TGH-ECCF Partnership

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Since the conclusion of the pilot in May 2022, more than 60 additional graduates have completed TGH programs at the original five partner sites. ECCF's sustained support has helped TGH build a strong foundation for continued work in Essex County.

Now, TGH is in the process of onboarding new program sites across Essex County, such as:

- Sacred Heart School Lynn
- STAR Center Essex County Sheriff's Department
- The Community Builders, Nevins Manor
- YMCA, Haverhill
- City of Lynn, Council on Aging

Our current goal is for 800 households from across Essex County to graduate from TGH programs by the end of the three-year grant period – and we're well on our way.

The partnership between TGH, ECCF, and community-based organizations across Essex County is a proven example of a county-level digital inclusion initiative, which can – and should – be replicated. TGH is currently preparing to launch programming in additional cities and communities across Massachusetts, using the Essex County pilot as a model.



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