



**For Immediate Release**

Date: May 24, 2021

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**\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

**SAN FRANCISCO WINS TOP TECHNOLOGY AWARD FOR SUPPORTING  
COMMUNITY HUBS AND EXPANDING HIGH-SPEED INTERNET DURING COVID-19**

*The CIO 100 awards recognizes San Francisco's commitment to provide safe, neighborhood-based remote learning for high-need children and youth. The Department of Technology distributed 1,400 Chromebooks, installed internet service at 40 Community Hubs and expanded high-speed internet to over 500 students in low-income housing.*

**San Francisco, CA** — The City and County of San Francisco will receive the 2021 CIO 100 award for supporting student learning through the pandemic by setting up neighborhood community hubs and expanding high-speed internet to public housing. Every year, the CIO 100 recognizes 100 innovative organizations around the world for strategic and operational excellence in information technology. Awardees will be recognized at the annual CIO 100 Symposium & Awards Ceremony in August.

“San Francisco knows how to respond to a disaster and recover. The early actions we took to respond to the pandemic saved countless lives, but we knew that when we issued our Stay Home order that we still needed to make sure that students, especially our most vulnerable students, had the resources they needed to continue their education,” said Mayor London N. Breed. “The Community Hub Initiative was a huge undertaking that helped so many of our young people through this pandemic, and I’m grateful to all of the City staff and partners who helped make it possible.”

In September 2020, San Francisco launched the Community Hub Initiative to provide in-person support for distance learning for the City’s most vulnerable student population. Due to lack of adequate equipment, internet access and technical assistance at home, many children and youth were at risk of falling behind. By coordinating with the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families, the Recreations and Parks Department, the Public Library, the San Francisco Unified School District, the Mayor’s Office, and community-based organizations, the Department of Technology set up and repurposed broadband fiber cable connection points and installed high-speed internet at the Community Hubs.

“Whether deployed as disaster service workers or in laying the groundwork for our Community Hubs, I am proud of the many ways in which San Francisco City workers stepped up and went above and beyond to fight this pandemic and its devastating impact,”

said City Administrator Carmen Chu. “Now the City is being recognized for our leadership in enabling connectivity and access for our most vulnerable families. I want to thank our Chief Information Officer Linda Gerull and her team for their commitment to San Francisco’s families. Linda understands that every child in San Francisco deserves an equal chance to learn and to succeed, and that these opportunities should never have to depend on where you live and whether you can afford internet service or a computer.”

Over the course of the program, 87 Community Hubs were set up across the City, connecting nearly 3,000 students to critical in-person supports for their distance learning curriculum, out of school time activities, nutritious meals, and social emotional needs. Out of nearly 400 parents who completed a survey about their neighborhood hub, 90 percent of parents surveyed felt their child is doing better emotionally because of the program.

The City also installed high-speed broadband to public housing sites, targeting those with high concentrations of students including Alice Griffith Apartments, North Beach Apartments, 111 Jones St, 201 Turk St and Hunters View Phase I & II.

“Helping San Francisco’s high needs children receive distance learning in a supportive environment has been a pleasure, we were delighted to bring connectivity, devices and expertise to this vital collaborative effort. It is an honor for the City to receive recognition for this important work,” said City Chief Information Officer and Executive Director of the Department of Technology Linda Gerull. “During shelter-in-place, the Department of Technology’s Public Safety Division made internet and technology access a top priority — and we were able to start by distributing roughly 1,400 Chromebooks, and installing internet service to 40 Community Hubs and high-speed fiber home internet service to over 500 students in low-income housings.”

These achievements are being recognized by the CIO 100 awards for speedy and agile innovation, equity-centered disaster response, the recovery of essential services for children and a new foundation of resilient infrastructure and community-based programming that can be used in future emergencies.

“SF took brave steps and immediate action in order to protect public health and keep our communities safe, our City partners came together to aid our children, youth, and families in historic and heroic fashion. As the pandemic transformed technology devices into de facto classrooms for all students, we ensured this school year children with the highest needs were prioritized and provided access to safe, digitally-connected and neighborhood-based spaces,” said Maria Su, Executive Director of the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families. “I’m in deep awe of how City and Community partners, most notably our youth development first responders, rose to the occasion serving on the pandemic front lines. It truly takes a village.”

Ninety-four percent of the total enrolled students in the Community Hubs are youth of color, 490 are English Learners. Moreover, 685 are residents of public housing, 240 are homeless, 94 live in single-room occupancy hotels (SROs), and 33 are foster youth.

The CIO 100 awards have recognized 100 organizations for their achievements in technology innovation annually for the past 34 years. Winners are chosen by a team of external judges consisting of former CIOs based on their use of leading-edge IT practices

that produce measurable results. Other 2021 awardees include Adobe, Slack, T-Mobile, the American Red Cross, IBC CIO, Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, and the United Postal Service. For more information, visit the 2021 CIO 100 awards press release [here](#).

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