



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeremy Cooney

## NYS Senator Cooney, The Shore Foundation, & Community Foundation Announce Plans to Provide Free Laptops to Community Groups

JEREMY COONEY February 2, 2022

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**(ROCHESTER, NY)** - Today, **Senator Jeremy Cooney (D-Rochester)**, **The Rochester Area Community Foundation**, and **The Shore Foundation** announced a new initiative to increase access to technology by providing newly refurbished laptops to community associations and neighborhood business associations in the City of Rochester.

Groups like CONEA and the Lyell Avenue Business Association, among others, are critical resources for vulnerable populations and valuable support systems for small businesses. These organizations are volunteer run and create programming around youth development, education counseling, entrepreneurship workshops, and other services. Most of these volunteer led organizations have limited budgets and are in need of updated technology. This initiative is a step towards closing the digital divide in our city neighborhoods and support our residents and small businesses.

The event was hosted by Upstate Increte, a member of the Lyell Avenue Business Association. Upstate Increte specializes in stamped and decorative concrete. The company recently launched Prestige, a program to help fill the shipping gap for local businesses in the surrounding area.

**Senator Jeremy Cooney:**

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*Our neighborhood and business associations are often the first stop for residents and entrepreneurs seeking to gain new skills, or take advantage of grant programs. I am grateful for the opportunity to partner with The Shore Foundation and the Rochester Area Community Foundation in this effort to help bridge the technology gap in our city neighborhoods. These groups are volunteer led and have their pulse on the needs of our community. It is a privilege to build on their work and help expand their impact."*

**Chance Wright, Vice President, The Shore Foundation:**

"We really appreciate Senator Cooney's commitment to these issues and taking action to help our community. With his support and the City of Rochester, these laptops will help to bridge the digital divide."

**Megan Alchowiak**, *Executive Director, The Shore Foundation:*

“Even though the pandemic has highlighted gaps of access to technology, these gaps existed before. These 30 laptops for the neighborhood associations in the City of Rochester is a great step in the right direction to improve digital equity in Rochester..”

**Simeon Bannister**, *Executive Vice President, Rochester Area Community Foundation:*

“The COVID pandemic has indisputably revealed the challenges of digital equity and our response has to begin with neighborhoods,” said Simeon Banister, Executive Vice President at Rochester Area Community Foundation. “Thank you to Senator Cooney for his willingness to connect government, philanthropy and, most importantly, the neighborhood organizations themselves to address this challenge. The Shore Foundation also deserves a debt of gratitude for their generosity and provision of such an innovative solution.”

**Clara Forbes**, *CONEA:*

“I want to thank Senator Cooney, RACF, and The Shore Foundation for their investment in organizations like CONEA. This new technology will improve our ability to assist community members and help our neighbors access needed resources. We must continue to work together to close the technology gap and improve outcomes for vulnerable populations.”

**Lydia Rivera**, *President, Lyell Avenue Business Association, Owner, ROC City Roadside Assistance:*

“The Lyell Avenue Business Association is grateful for this new investment by New York State, RACF, and The Shore Foundation. Receiving this technology will help us support local entrepreneurs and small businesses seeking to build strong companies in our area. We thank Senator Cooney for facilitating this program with community partners.”

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