

URBAN ED

25 YEARS OF IMPACT

2000–2025



Advancing Equity
Expanding Pathways
Transforming Futures

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LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER



For 25 years, Urban Ed has been committed to unlocking opportunity for youth and adults in Washington, DC’s most underserved communities. What began as a grassroots response to systemic inequities in education and workforce access has grown into a nationally recognized, globally connected model for technology career development.

In 2000, we opened our doors with one program and a belief that talent is universal — access is not. Today, Urban Ed spans 6 industry career pathways, 25+ global certification courses, corporate partnerships around the world, and a proven pipeline that equips our learners to enter high-growth IT careers.

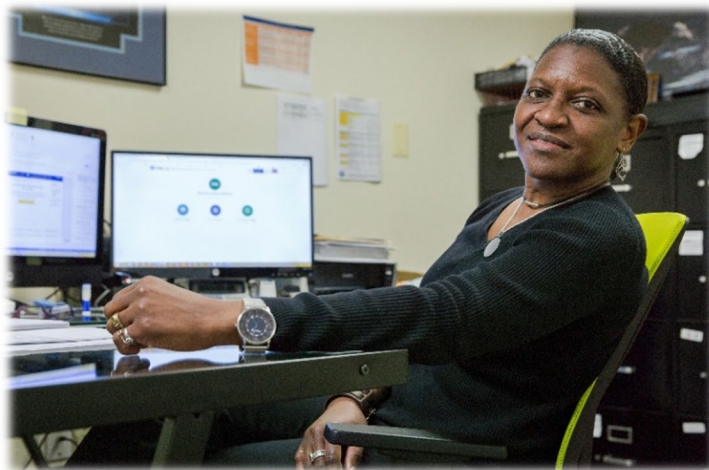
As we celebrate this milestone year, our mission remains clear: **to provide world-class STEM and IT training that leads to economic mobility and generational change.**

Thank you to our partners, funders, volunteers, alumni, and community — your belief and investment fuel every success story.

As we reflect on 25 years of growth, resilience, and possibility, you’ll notice butterflies woven throughout this report. They symbolize the transformations we witness every day — the moment a learner realizes they can chart a new path, the shift from potential to empowerment, and the ripple effects that follow.

Here’s to the next 25!

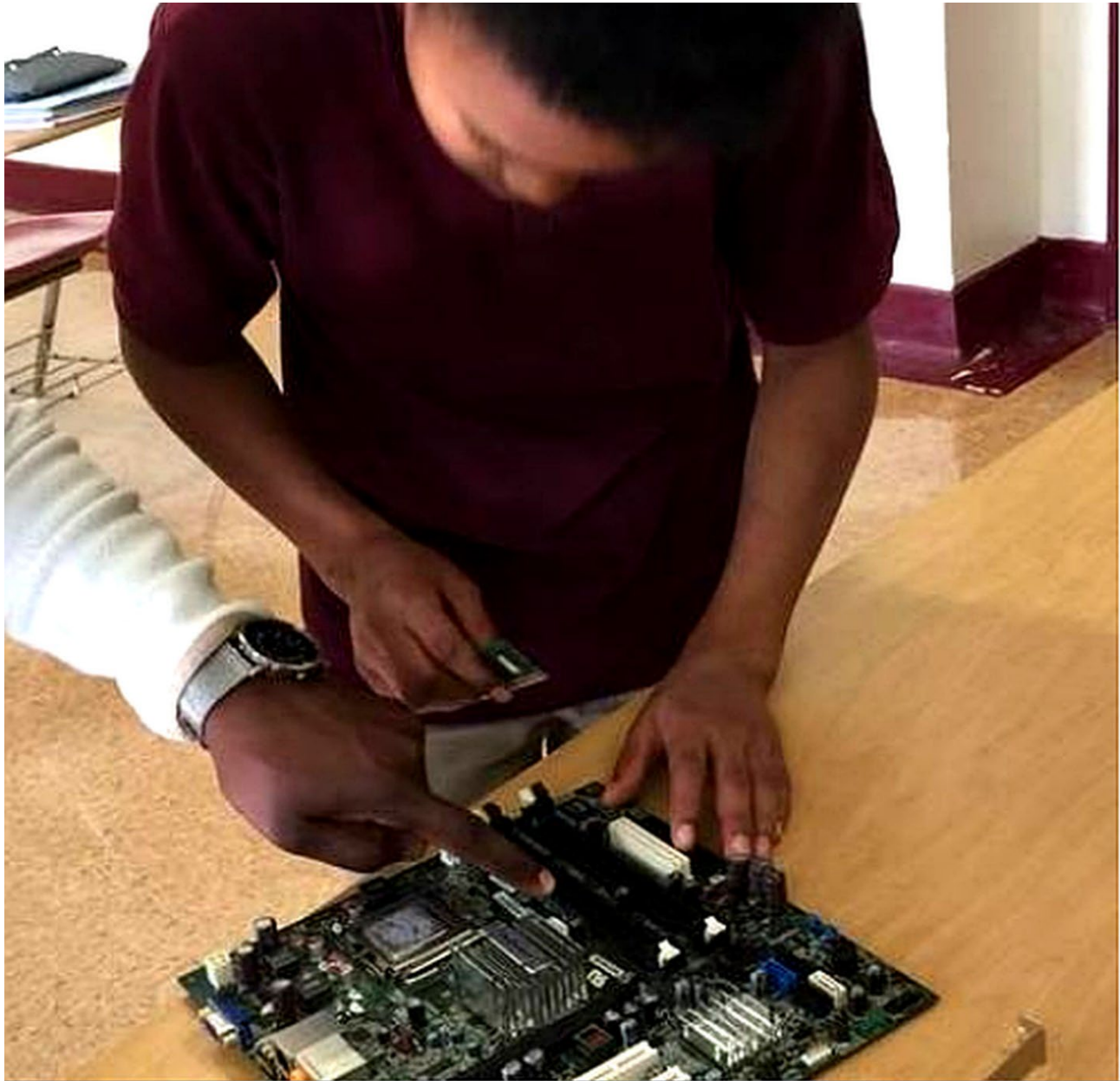
Roxanne J. Williams
Founder & President



OUR 25-YEAR JOURNEY



A journey of access, innovation, and generational opportunity



Over the past 25 years, Urban Ed has grown from a small, community-led effort into a nationally recognized model for advancing digital skills, economic mobility, and workforce equity. What began in 2000 as a response to widening educational and technological gaps in Washington, DC quickly transformed into a movement—one that has touched thousands of lives and reshaped economic futures across generations.

Early Beginnings: A Vision Ahead of Its Time

Urban Ed’s earliest programs were built around one core belief:

technology can be a powerful tool to change the trajectory of a one’s life

In 2000—long before technology reached the sophistication we know today—Urban Ed had the foresight to recognize its potential to transform outcomes for low-income and underserved children, youth, and families. Even then, we saw technology as:

- a spark to ignite curiosity in young people,
- a gateway for young adults to gain cutting-edge skills, and
- a bridge toward long-term, family-sustaining careers.

Through early hands-on computer career activities in the **TechnoForce** program and foundational exploration for middle- and high-school learners through our **TechnoAcademy**, Urban



Ed established a pathway that nurtured curiosity, creativity, and confidence. These formative years laid the groundwork for what became our signature approach—growing talent from childhood through adulthood.

Expanding Opportunities for Children: Lil Bitties TechnoCamp

What began as a fun summer tech enrichment camp soon evolved into a formalized program when we uncovered a deeper need. Over 83% of participating children were scoring well below proficiency in reading and math and lacked foundational personal skills such as tying shoes, buttoning shirts, or socializing effectively. The **Lil Bitties** became an academic-focused, tech-enhanced program designed to strengthen early learning while exposing children to technology at a formative age. It reinforced our belief that early exposure can change the trajectory of a child’s life and lay the foundation for future success.



Scaling Opportunities & Transforming Lives: Workforce Development Pathways

As technology evolved, Urban Ed’s programming evolved with it. The TechnoForce grew into the **STEMAcad**, expanding pathways into high-demand STEM and IT fields for youth, young adults, and parents. What began as career exploration became industry-aligned workforce development, preparing learners with:

- the mindset,
 - the hands-on experience,
 - and the industry certifications,
- needed to envision new possibilities for their futures.

In response to community demand and widening labor-market gaps, Urban Ed launched comprehensive IT workforce programs for adults and young adults. Over time, this grew into a robust talent-development ecosystem featuring:

- multiple industry career pathways
- 25+ globally recognized IT certification courses
- employer partnerships
- hands-on labs and coaching
- job placement and long-term wage-growth support

These programs unlocked access to high-growth technology careers for residents historically excluded from the digital economy. Today, Urban Ed alumni thrive in cloud computing, cybersecurity, technical support, network engineering, and more—earning the wages and stability needed to transform their futures and support their families.



A robust talent development ecosystem



multiple industry career pathways



25+ globally recognized IT certification courses



employer partnerships



hands-on labs



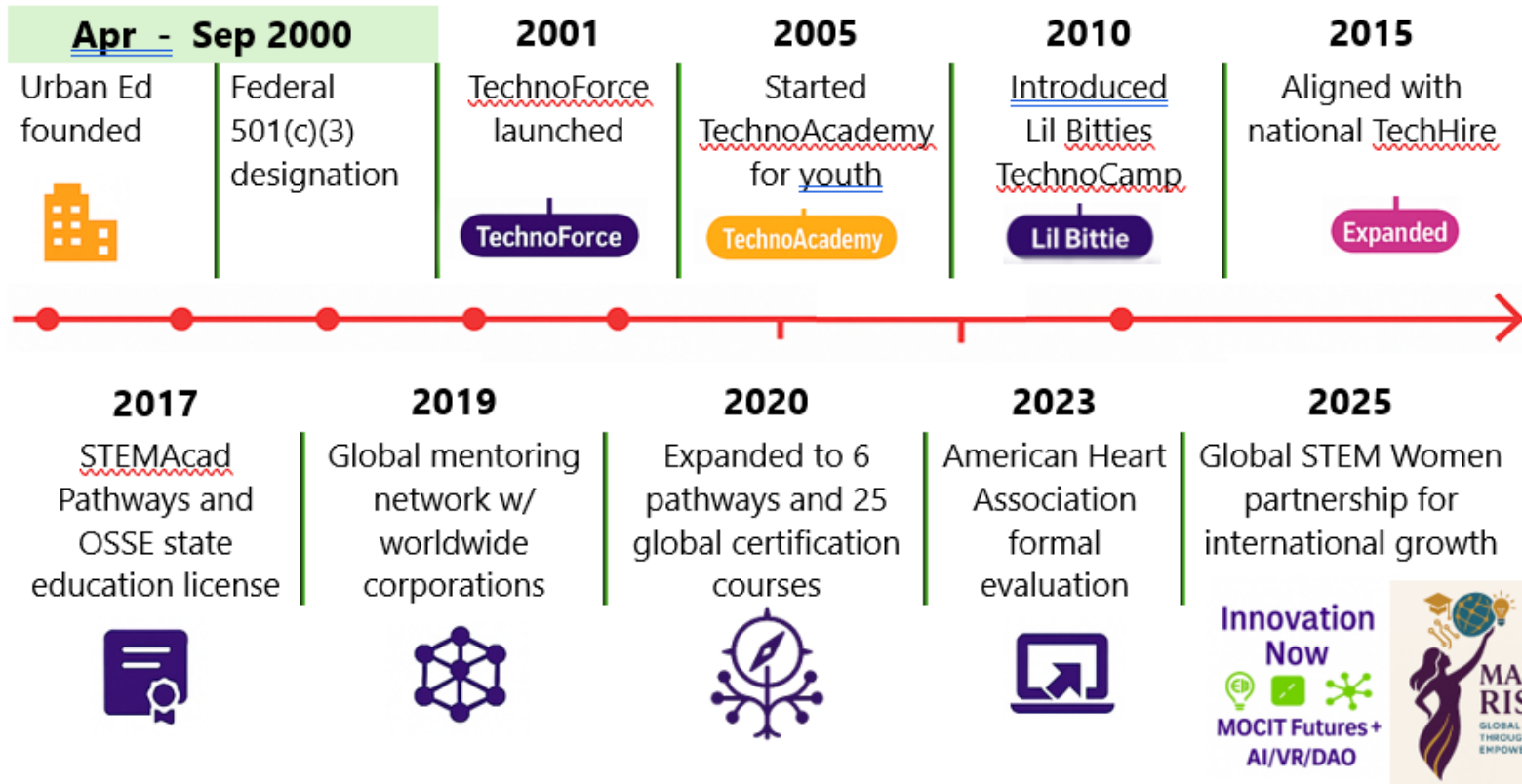
job placement and long-term wage growth support

TIMELINE:

25 YEARS OF PROGRESS



7,500+ Individuals Served	1,050,000+ Training Hours	3,300+ Certifications Earned	\$323M Aggregate Income Impact
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OUR DNA

ROOTED IN PURPOSE THAT SHAPED 25 YEARS

Mission

The mission of Urban Ed is to provide children, youth and adults in the District of Columbia region with technology-driven education, information and skill development for sustained futures.

This mission has guided Urban Ed since its founding and continues to anchor our work in technology-driven learning, workforce readiness, and economic mobility.

Vision

Urban Ed’s vision is to **use technology as a catalyst to transform lives** – by being a prominent provider of industry-recognized IT training, strengthening community and corporate partnerships, modeling best-in-class practices, and creating scalable solutions that can uplift communities locally and beyond.

This forward-looking vision has been vanguard to Urban Ed’s growth strategy and informed our 25 years of service.

THE VALUES BEHIND 25 YEARS OF IMPACT

For a quarter century, Urban Ed has been grounded in the principles that define who we are and how we serve. These core values reflect the standards we uphold in every program, partnership, and learner interaction. Together, they form the organizational “DNA” that has guided our mission, shaped our culture, and fueled our impact across the Washington, DC region.



ACCOUNTABILITY

- Leadership responsibility
- Reliability in all interactions

INTEGRITY

- Ethical behavior and truthfulness
- Consistency in actions



CLIENT SERVICE

- Client needs are top priority
- Deliver on all commitments



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Encourage healthy risk-taking
- Inspire creative action



PERSEVERANCE

- Steadfast in purpose
- Striving for excellence

RESULTS-ORIENTED

- Focus on outcomes
- Client satisfaction first

GLOBAL MENTORSHIP & CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS



EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

Timeline Milestones

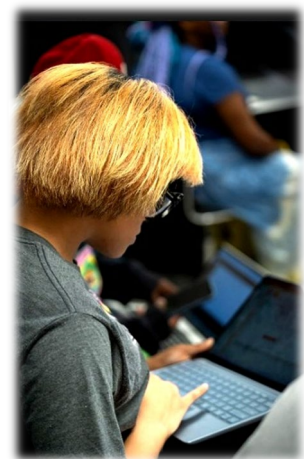
- **Built a global mentoring network (2019)**
Urban Ed began expanding its mentorship model by connecting learners with IT professionals across diverse geographies, allowing participants to gain exposure to real-world industry perspectives beyond Washington, DC.
- **Partnered with Global STEM Women for international growth (2025)**
This partnership created new avenues for cross-border mentorship, knowledge-sharing, and leadership development, expanding Urban Ed's impact into global STEM networks and offering learners direct access to international role models and professional ecosystems.

Urban Ed's mentorship model goes beyond traditional classroom instruction. By pairing learners with IT professionals from around the world, the organization offers a powerful blend of **technical guidance, industry insight, and social capital** that supports long-term advancement.

These partnerships are a natural extension of Urban Ed's mission to deliver technology-driven education and workforce development opportunities, helping individuals gain the skills and networks needed for sustained futures.

Through global mentors, corporate partners, and community collaborators, Urban Ed learners gain:

- **Real-world exposure** to industry roles, expectations, and emerging technologies.
- **Professional networks** that expand access to career opportunities.
- **Meaningful relationships** that inspire confidence, resilience, and long-term growth.
- **A bridge to the global digital economy** to ensure competitiveness.



This model creates exponential impact—bridging the digital divide, supporting diversity in the tech workforce, and strengthening economic mobility.

VERIFIED IMPACT, PROVEN RESULTS



WHAT INDEPENDENT EVALUATION SHOWS ABOUT URBAN ED'S IMPACT

Urban Ed's impact is not just reflected in individual lived success stories — it has been independently validated. In 2023, the American Heart Association's (AHA) Bernard J. Tyson Fund conducted a mixed-methods evaluation of Urban Ed's IT career pathways, including surveys of a sample of about 50 post-program participants at various levels in the program and in-depth direct interviews with 25% of graduates. The findings confirm what our learners, alumni, employers, and partners have long known: Urban Ed is a proven, high-impact model for economic mobility, career advancement, workforce readiness, and long-term well-being.

Across nearly every metric measured — employment, income, confidence, mental health, quality of life, and economic stability — Urban Ed participants reported dramatic, positive gains after completing their training. The evaluation shows Urban Ed not only helps people *get jobs*, but helps them *stabilize, advance, and thrive*.

Impact at a Glance

From the AHA Evaluation of Urban Ed Participants:

- **95%** said the education and skills training they received at Urban Ed directly contributed to their ability to find work.
- Employment jumped from **43.8% before** Urban Ed to **89.6% after** completing training.
- **81%** of participants reported an increase in salary.
- Two-thirds now earn **\$60,000–\$69,999 or over \$100,000** annually—a dramatic shift from pre-program incomes, where most earned no income at all.



Beyond Employment: Improvements in Life, Health & Stability

Urban Ed's impact extends well beyond workforce outcomes. According to the evaluation:

Economic Stability

Before Urban Ed, one-third of participants were “*just getting by*” or experiencing financial hardship. After completing training, 93.8% reported they were now “*living comfortably*” or “*doing alright*.”

Housing Security

Participants described significant improvements in housing stability — moving from shelters, unstable living situations, or temporary arrangements to sustained housing or even homeownership.

Health & Well-Being

Before Urban Ed, participants frequently described stress, anxiety, depression, financial pressure, and feelings of hopelessness. After Urban Ed, more than 75% rated their overall quality of life as *very good or excellent*, with many reporting decreased stress, improved mental health, and renewed optimism about the future.

Confidence & Career Readiness

More than 87% reported being *extremely confident* in their skills, knowledge, and ability to advance in their careers after Urban Ed — a dramatic shift from pre-program levels.

These **changes are not incidental; they reflect Urban Ed’s holistic approach** — certifications plus mentorship, wraparound support, financial barriers removed, and a learning community that participants described repeatedly as “family-like,” “supportive,” and “life-changing.”

Source: Urban Ed Independent Program Evaluation, American Heart Association, 2023

WHAT LEARNERS TOLD THE AHA

“I’m able to provide for my family. I’m just in better place.”

“When I moved from the salary I was making to the salary they started me at – that was life-changing.”

“I make more than enough now to support everyone and keep a roof over our head.

“I’m a lot happier now... it’s a breath of fresh air.”

“I used to feel hopeless – now I’m confident and moving forward.”

IMPACT AT A GLANCE



95%

said Urban Ed training directly helped them find work



81%

reported an increase in salary



44% to 90%

Employment jumped post-program



\$60,000 -100,000

Two-thirds now earn

SUCCESS STORIES



A Pathway of Possibility Across Life Stages

DAYSА — LIL BITTIES

At just five years old, Daysa entered Urban Ed's summer program struggling with frustration, low academic confidence, and behavioral challenges. School felt "dumb," and learning felt out of reach. When Urban Ed conducted her kindergarten readiness assessment, Daysa scored only 33% of benchmark skills. But through one-on-one support, patient encouragement, consistent routines, interactive technology, and daily opportunities to practice foundational skills with a caring adult, Daysa began to see herself differently. By the end of the summer, her assessment score rose to 68%, and her outlook transformed completely. For the first time, she described school as "cool." Daysa's story reflects the heart of Urban Ed's youth pipeline—catching learning gaps early, nurturing curiosity, and setting children on a path toward long-term academic and personal confidence.



“Urban Ed helped my child see herself as capable for the first time.”

MARQUISE — TECHNOFORCE (the early program years) HS DROP OUT → CLOUD & DEVOPS ENGINEER

When Marquise arrived at Urban Ed at age 18, he had dropped out of high school and become deeply embedded in the street life of Anacostia. He had a reputation, a street name, and few viable options for the future. But after joining Urban Ed in 2012, everything changed. Within just eight months, Urban Ed's staff helped him earn his GED, rebuild his confidence, and develop the discipline needed to pursue a professional career.

Marquise quickly began stacking certifications—A+, Microsoft, and HDI-CSR—and scored the highest in his class on every exam. Urban Ed continued to support him as he advanced, helping him earn Network+, Security+, CCNA, AWS Solutions Architect, and AWS DevOps. Today, Marquise works 100% remotely, earns a six-figure salary, and has completely left behind the negative influences of his past.

“Look at me now, I am IT”



SUCCESS STORIES



A Pathway of Possibility Across Life Stages (Continued)

DAKEIA — STEMACAD CYBERSECURITY PROFESSIONAL, SINGLE MOTHER

When Dakeia enrolled at Urban Ed, she was balancing a disability, raising her children, and navigating the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. She nearly gave up—until Urban Ed’s instructors stepped in with steadfast support, structure, and belief in her potential. Their coaching helped her complete her Sec+ certification, build confidence, and develop the discipline she once struggled to find.

With Urban Ed’s training and encouragement, she secured her first entry-level cybersecurity job, quickly advanced into a managerial role within one year, and now earns over six figures supporting the United States national security at the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA).



“Because of Urban Ed’s support and faith in me, I know I can achieve anything.”

SAM — STEMACAD RETURNING CITIZEN → NETWORK ARCHITECT, FATHER

Sam first heard about Urban Ed from a friend who had completed the program a year earlier. At the time, he was working as a concierge and trying to rebuild after serious setbacks in his teens. Although he had always wanted a career in IT, the pressures of early parenthood and financial instability led him down a path that resulted in drug charges and time in federal prison. Determined to create a different life for his son, Sam came to Urban Ed for a new start.

With steady mentorship, hands-on training, and support through every barrier, Sam earned multiple certifications and secured his first IT job as an IT Assistant at a regional nonprofit. Today, he holds four global IT certifications and works as a Network Architect at Discovery Communications, fully providing for his son and shaping a future that once felt out of reach.

“I used to feel hopeless—now I’m confident and moving forward.”



IMPACT



Safer neighborhoods



Fewer youth entering juvenile justice



Fewer youth entering juvenile justice



More families with buying power

94% YOUNG ADULTS

- Economic Stability
- Housing Security
- Health & Well-Being
- Reduced Homelessness, stress, depression, feelings of hopelessness

75% TEENS

- Increased school attendance and reduced truancy
- 96%** Improved IT awareness
- Improved school performance.

83% LIL BITTIES

- 1+** Improved STEM skills, knowledge and averages
- 67%** Children confident at grade level in school
- 74%** Children confident at grade level in school
- “Urban Ed is a ray of light that should never go down”*

7,500+
Individuals Served

1,050,000+
Training Hours

3,300+
Certifications Earned

\$323M
Aggregate Income Impact

LOOKING AHEAD



Scaling Innovation: Building the Next 25 Years

For 25 years, Urban Ed has stood at the intersection of equity, opportunity, and technology—adapting, innovating, and pushing forward as communities and the workforce have evolved. As we look ahead, we are not simply scaling programs; we are reimagining what access, learning, and economic mobility can look like in the future of work. The next chapter of Urban Ed is bold, expansive, and deeply intentional.

Future-Ready Learning for a Rapidly Changing World

Urban Ed is investing in forward-looking educational models that reflect how people learn, work, and thrive in a digital economy. This includes strategic investments in artificial intelligence (AI), virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR), and emerging decentralized learning models, empowering communities to have a voice at the table and move confidently into technology-enabled careers that did not exist a generation ago.

These innovations are not about novelty—they are about relevance, resilience, and readiness. By integrating cutting-edge tools with human-centered instruction, Urban Ed is preparing our communities to adapt, lead, and grow in an ever-changing workforce. Urban Ed is transforming neighborhoods into hubs of innovation and possibility.



Urban Ed's vision for its future labs for entire families learning cutting edge tech together. Pictured, a mother & her son w/ an UrbanEd instructor

Dual-Generation Impact: Investing in Families and Futures

Urban Ed is redefining workforce development through a dual-generation lens. Building on national recognition and early success, we are fully integrating the Lil Bitties early STEM model into workforce programs serving young mothers, including the groundbreaking of our Mothers of Color in IT (MOCIT) initiative.

This approach acknowledges a simple truth: when parents thrive, families thrive. By advancing economic opportunity for young mothers while nurturing early STEM

identity and educational growth for their children, Urban Ed is creating pathways for intergenerational stability, confidence, and family cohesion.

Expanding Regionally, Innovating Strategically

Urban Ed is extending its reach beyond Washington, DC, with strategic growth into more Maryland counties, particularly around AgriTech—the intersection of agriculture, technology, and sustainability. Through new learning centers and national partnerships, our forward-thinking plan is to connect youth and young adults to technology-driven careers that strengthen food systems, environmental resilience, and regional economies.

This growth reflects how Urban Ed is continuously staying ahead of trends and aligning innovation with real-world workforce needs and building future-focused pipelines in high-growth industries.

Global Vision, Local Roots

Looking ahead, Urban Ed is also exploring international collaboration through partnerships such as Global STEM Women, opening doors for equity-centered, cross-border learning and shared innovation—especially for women and girls historically underrepresented in technology fields.

While our vision is global, our roots remain deeply local. Every expansion is grounded in community voice, lived experience, and a belief in shared progress.

The Road Ahead

Urban Ed’s future is built on the same principles that have guided us for 25 years: equity, access, innovation, and community power. As technology reshapes the workforce and the world, we remain committed to ensuring that opportunity grows alongside it.

The next 25 years are not just about preparing for the future—they are about inspiring community to build it together.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

25 Years of Partnership, Belief, and Collective Impact

For 25 years, Urban Ed’s work has been made possible by the funders, partners, mentors, volunteers, and community champions who believed in our mission and invested in our communities. Your belief in what’s possible has fueled thousands of success stories and expanded pathways to an abundance of economic opportunity. We are deeply grateful for the trust, collaboration, and shared commitment that have powered this work across generations.



Independent recognition reflects our commitment to transparency, financial accountability, and community-led impact.

Major Funders & Institutional Supporters

Urban Ed is deeply grateful to the partners whose long-term support and investment helped launch, sustain, and expand our programs as our impact grew.

- American Heart Association
- American Honda Foundation
- Bank of America (*founding support*)
- Greater Washington Community Foundation
- Henry E. Niles Foundation
- JP Morgan Chase
- Justice Grants Administration
- Many Hands
- Microsoft
- Richard & Nancy Marriott Foundation
- Share Fund

Corporate & Employer Partners

Corporate partners have provided technical expertise, mentorship, curriculum alignment, and real-world exposure for learners pursuing IT careers. We are grateful to the partners who help connect learning to real-world opportunities for Urban Ed learners.

- Allied Telecom
- Cisco Networking Academy
- CompTIA
- Crown Castle
- GovCon Industry Partners
- PearsonVue
- uCertify
- USA Federal Agencies
- TechResolve, Inc.



Mentors & Volunteers

Our deepest thanks to the hundreds of mentors, instructors, and skilled volunteers from across the region and around the world who have given their time, expertise, and encouragement to our learners. From Professional Development Weeks to mock interviews & professional development to mentoring sessions and painting our facilities — you make this work possible.

Community & Ecosystem Partners

Urban Ed thanks its community partners who strengthen the foundation around our learners—supporting families, removing barriers, and reinforcing the conditions needed for sustained growth and opportunity.

- Camden Dream Center
- Fan DC
- Giving Together
- LifeCents
- Negotiation Works
- Vets Group



We are deeply grateful to every supporter—past and present—who has invested in Urban Ed’s mission and believed in the power of technology, equity, and community-led change.

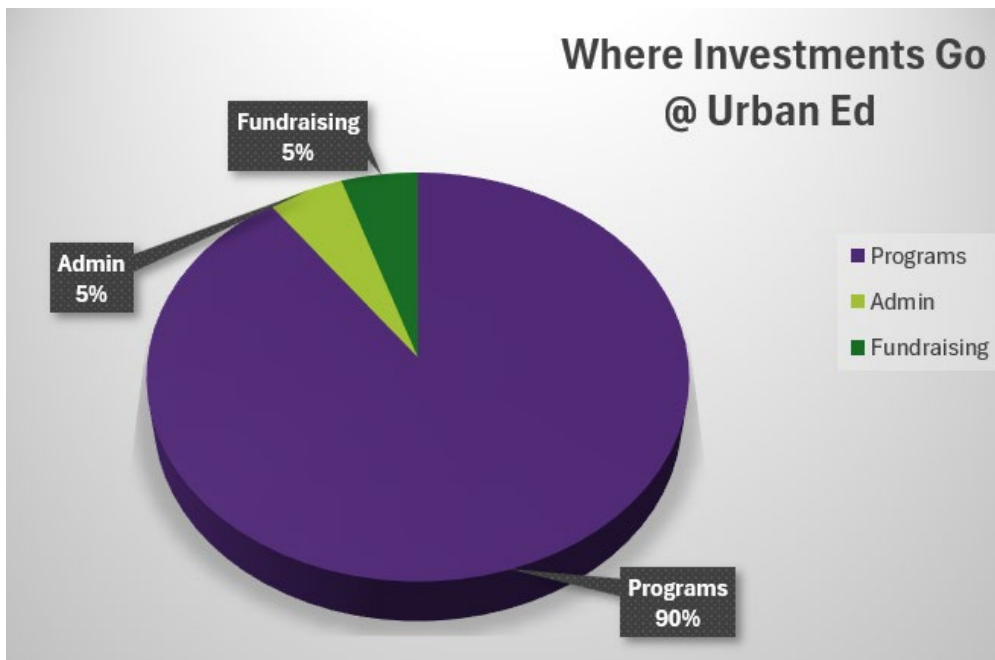
Full recognition of all contributors and partners over 25 years is available at: urbaned.org/partnerships and urbaned.org/contributors

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT



\$7M+ raised • 90% to programs • \$323M+ in learner wages

Thanks to the generous support of our partners, Urban Ed has raised over **\$7 million** over 25 years. By operating lean and directing 90% of funding to programs, our learners have generated more than **\$323 million** in aggregate income gains.



Where Your Investment Goes

- **Programs: 90%**
High-quality instruction, industry certifications, coaching, mentorship, labs, and learner supports.
- **Administration: 5%**
Core systems, compliance, governance, and organizational sustainability.
- **Fundraising: 5%**
Relationship-building and resource development to sustain and grow impact.

Every dollar invested in Urban Ed helps power real careers, lasting mobility, and generational opportunity.

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



1Breanna Day, Urban Ed Board Chair

Stewarding the Next Chapter: A Message from the Board

Twenty-five years ago, Urban Ed opened its doors with a single program and an unwavering belief: that talent is everywhere, but access is not. Today, that belief has produced over 7,500 transformed lives, \$323 million in aggregate learner income, and a model that is recognized nationally as a gold standard for digital equity and workforce development.

We honor the learners who entrusted us with their goals, the partners who strengthened our programs, the funders who invested in our growth, and the community that continues to believe in the power of technology to transform lives.

We stand at a remarkable inflection point. The next 25 years will demand even bolder investment in emerging technologies, dual-generation programming, and regional expansion. The need is urgent, and Urban Ed's track record proves we can deliver.

Thank you for being part of this 25-year legacy. We invite you to join us in building what comes next.

Breanna Day, Board Chair, on behalf of the Urban Ed Board of Directors

