Estella's Brilliant Bus, a Class Act:
A Call to Arms for Brilliant Bus Brigade Partners

Background: A National Need for Computer Scientists, Programmers, Engineers

Though computer science drives innovation in the US economy and society, and despite a growing demand for jobs in the field, a focus on computer science in school curriculums remains marginalized throughout the United States and in Michigan. Code.org reports that 25 states still do not allow students to count computer science courses toward high school graduation. However, as record numbers of Americans go online, the gap between those who have access to technology and those who don't is widening, and the have nots are largely underserved urban students. Larry Irving, assistant secretary for communications and information for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), calls the divide a "racial ravine" that affects black and Hispanic households most although black and Hispanic households are twice as likely to own computers today as they were in 1994.

The Digital Divide

In a world increasingly dependent on computer technology, answers to the question of how to best to prepare students for the workplace of the future elude educators in the targeted environments. Unfortunately, most urban school systems produce students who have low skills and are, thus, unprepared for college or the technological work force of the 21st century. Far too many urban students matriculate through school believing they are computer literate if they can send email or respond to twitter, or complete a web-based course. Little opportunity exists for them to engage in computer coding or in creating computer applications within the regular school curriculum. Missing for them is a riveted focus on computer science and the applications that spring from the same that is integrated into their regular school curriculum.

Code.org labels computer science as America's untapped opportunity. Projections of more than one million more jobs in computer science than students by 2020 provide a $500 billion dollar opportunity along with 1.4 million computing jobs. Also, because computer science is a top paying college degree and computer programming jobs are growing at 2 times the national average, most troubling is the realization that less than 2.4% of college students graduate with a degree in computer science, and the numbers have dropped since last decade. (Code.org).

A Personal Response That Is Working

Estella's Brilliant Bus, A Class Act Learning Center, Inc. (EBB).is a 501c3 award-winning firm that is committed to closing the digital divide among underserved children. Estella Pyfrom is its founder. As such, it sponsors Estella's Brilliant Bus, an innovative mobile learning lab that provides computer-based programming for under-served students in grades PK-12. EBB is

expanding its service to include sponsoring charter schools for underserved students in targeted American cities. National, state level, and local resources are needed to support this noble aim.

Estella Pyfrom has lifted a whole generation of families from the depths of despair to a foundation of hope. Since the inception of the founding and building of **Estella's Brilliant Bus** in 2006 to this date, the **Brilliant Bus** has traveled to migrant camps, parking lots, failing schools, and open fields to bring technology to school age children to close the digital divide. Students experience technology via desktops, laptops, tablets, and smart phones and use these to access a wide variety of web-based computer programming concerned with reading, writing, science, social studies, mathematics, career education, and computer coding. Students experience technology in their residential locales and are aided in their skill development via adaptive and individualized programming.

Beneficiaries of the Bus include English language learners from Cuba, Spain, Argentina, India, Japan, Italy, Brazil, Haiti, and other European countries. These students experience technology applications in their native language if applicable for them. In this regard, the Brilliant Bus customizes learning for a wide variety of students and provides programming keyed to their individual needs and language requirements.

Mrs. Pyfrom has been nominated as a CNN Hero in 2013, and she was honored at the White House by President as a Point of Light Honoree for 2013, honored on Dr. Oz, honored by Toyota and Oprah, and recently she was featured in a Microsoft commercial during the Super Bowl showcasing the Brilliant Bus and her commitment to take such technology nationwide to children who do not have immediate access to the same.

Responding to This National Crisis

In particular, **EBB** seeks to respond to the national mandate for more emphasis being placed on computer science in elementary, middle, and high school settings. Accordingly, **EBB** seeks to target cities identified as the most dangerous in America and provide resources and support needed to establish successful charter schools that address the digital divide and provide hope to children trapped in environments where crime, neglect, poor educational options, and hopelessness for the future are elements that doom innocent children.

EBB is committed to locating meaningful solutions to the various issues of disparities that affect underserved children and families on a daily basis and to addressing the widening achievement gap and digital divide for underserved children. To that end, EBB will establish local interest in developing high quality K-8 charter schools with technology-enhanced

school curricula to impact students' ability to demonstrate grade level or higher performance on state assessments and competence in computer literacy and computer applications.

Estella's Brilliant Bus' commitment to computer science instruction in K-12 schools stems from an awareness of the important role computer science will play in America within the next decade. Additionally, our positive experience connecting urban children to computer science and technology confirms the high interest among the students at the same time that many future jobs in technology will go begging for lack of programmers and technicians. Connecting urban children to computer science in school establishes purpose and interest in learning; also, learning computer coding or creating computer applications could lead students to high paying careers.
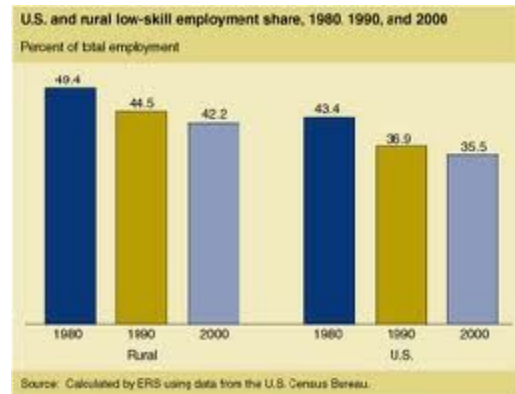

Join the Brilliant Bus Brigade

Friends, residents of target cities, colleagues, charter school educators, internet providers, hardware manufacturers, web-based learning agencies, family resource groups, technologists, computer scientists, and local, state-level, and national partners as well as interested others are all invited to join **Estella's Brilliant Bus Brigade.** The Brilliant Bus Brigade aids in large and small ways to contribute to our computer science student campaign. To that end, plans include establishing technology centers and high quality charter schools that promote acquisition of technology and computer skills from kindergarten to grade eight and beyond. Code.org projects that ten to fifteen years from now (2024 at the earliest), computer science will be as important a school course as reading and math.

Our Target Communities Where Poor Children Reside

U.S. and rural low-skill employment share, 1980, 1990, and 2000
Percent of total employment

Rural: 1980: 49.4, 1990: 44.5, 2000: 42.2
U.S.: 1980: 43.4, 1990: 36.9, 2000: 35.5

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Goals

To address the overall social, economic, and psychological outcomes for underserved children, families in these communities, EBB is committed to the following 3 goals and their corresponding objectives: **(1) to** illuminate the problem of low-achievement in targeted cities and the lack of technology education available to children; (2) **to e**stablish a structure containing a national office and executive oversight, state level offices, and local offices required to pursue and achieve charter school approvals;; and (3) to create and establish as beacons of excellence the specific charter schools that match state standards and that immerse children in technology and computer literacy.

Sponsors & Partners Needed with Diverse Resources

EBB seeks to develop state of the art, technologically-based charter schools that include all the elements found in high quality schools such as labs, media centers, theaters, health clinics, technology across the school curriculum, learning resources, etc.

One Solution: High Quality Technologically-Based Charter Schools in Underserved Cities in America

41 states and the District of Columbia allow charter schools

Resources We Need To Develop High Quality Charter Schools:

The following is partial list representing some of the support from partners that we desire.

1. Brilliant Bus replicas for 5 sites
2. National Curriculum Experts
3. Curriculum Developers & Writers for Charter School Applications
4. Upgrading Facilities for Charter Schools

5. Wiring and Upgrading for National Office/Charter Schools
6. IT Systems for National Office/Charter Schools
7. Web-Based Learning Platforms for National Office/Charter Schools
8. Software Learning Platforms for National Office/Charter Schools
9. Distance Learning Center for National Office/Charter Schools
10. Furnishings for Offices/Classrooms: National Office/Charter Schools
11. Internet Providers for National Office/Charter Schools
12. Transportation for Charter School Students
13. School Uniforms for Charter School Students
14. Technology for Office and Classrooms
15. Hand Held Technology for Students
16. Technology-Based Resource Centers National Office/ Charter Schools
17. Science Labs for Charter Schools
18. Cafeterias for Charter Schools
19. Teacher and Staff Developers for National Office/Charter Schools
20. Founding Principals and Leadership Team for Charter Schools
21. School Nurses and School Health Centers for Charter Schools
22. Engineering Labs [S.T.E.M. Labs] for Charter Schools
23. Career and College Readiness Resource Centers for Charter Schools
24. Family Resource Centers for Charter Schools
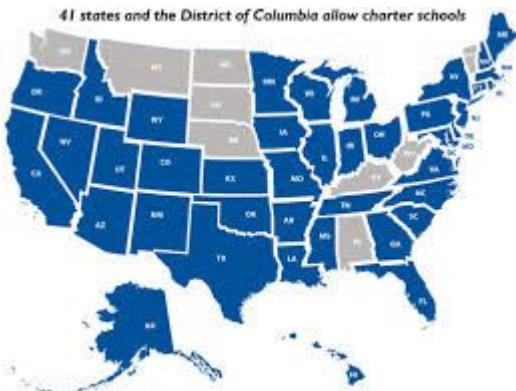25. Committed groups of adults: **you!**

"Have knowledge will travel............"

Estella Pyfrom, Founder
Estella's Brilliant Bus

A Call to Arms for Sponsors & Partners

Accordingly, the intent of this proposal is to clarify the targeted objectives of **Estella's Brilliant Bus,** Inc. as these relate to developing charter schools in targeted cities and neighborhoods and to solicit sponsors and supporters interested in responding to the challenges in the targeted cities needed to develop a charter school that is

focused on students learning information technology and their developing solid computer literacy skills. Our goal is to generate national, state, and local resources needed to establish high quality, technologically-based charter schools in 5 targeted cities as demonstration models of successful urban schools.

"I wasn't quite ready to go home and sit in a rocking chair"

................................Estella Pyfrom, Founder
Estella's Brilliant Bus

Sponsors & Partners Desired to Help Close the Digital Divide
Estella's Brilliant Bus is soliciting and garnering intellectual and fiscal resources needed address the needs of underserved children in underserved communities across America to establish a pipeline of success for underserved youths that lifts them beyond the negative attributes of their environments. We need your help. Join our Brilliant Bus Brigade and bring your resources to bear on this national crisis.

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Join the Brilliant Bus Brigade!

Estella says, "I need help!" Join the Brilliant Bus Brigade and commit resources to helping children and to addressing this national crisis.

Seeking groups committed to closing the digital divide among all underserved children in targeted areas.

"Get on the Bus & Help Me Close the Digital Divide!"

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Estella and let's discuss how your group can help.

Email: Estella@brilliantbus.org
Text or Call: 561-985-1889.