



Photo credit: San Diego Tribune

UWST Distance Learning Expansion

CGLR Webinar – July 28, 2021

United Way of
the Southern Tier



The challenge

- Rural communities – limited or NO internet connection
- Parents that could not work from home
- Children needing care WITH connectivity
- A system already under duress
- Children at risk of falling behind
- Community eager for a solution

How we responded

- Engaged all stakeholders – CBOs, school districts, local unions, corporations
- BASIC NEEDS were met FIRST
- UWST board committed \$100,000 specific to distance learning
- Secured spaces that were DOH compliant
- Staff & volunteers - safety, supervision and tutoring assistance
- Ensured connectivity – internet, hardware, software, headsets
- Opened registration

Results

- 8 sites open across 2 counties
- 1 small, community-based, pod-like (7 children)
- Others were much larger in size, compliant with OCFS/DOH regulations
- Increased the school-age “slot” capacity by 325
- Upon initial opening, 151 slots were reserved
- Remaining slots were filled/nearly-filled over the following weeks
- Secured 5 additional “stand-by” locations for potential wait lists



Lessons learned

- ***“Houston, we have a problem.”*** ... (capacity in a pandemic)
- ***“If you build it, they will come.”*** ... (assumptions vs. reality)
- ***“I’m walking here! I’m walking here!”*** ... (transportation in rural communities)
- ***“You’re gonna need a bigger boat.”*** ... (sustainability)
- ***“I’ve got a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore.”*** ... (moving forward)



Apollo 13 (1995)

Field of Dreams (1989)

Midnight Cowboy (1969)

Jaws (1975)

Wizard of Oz (1939)

THANK YOU.

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