

## Member Spotlight

### Connecticut Science Center Builds Expanded Programming with CEN Connectivity

The Connecticut Science Center exemplifies the power of CEN membership for expanding and accelerating educational programming and access to broadband Internet access. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic raised the stakes and increased the urgency to provide fast and effective remote learning solutions. Through their STEM in a Box and Virtual STEM Career Showcase programs and participation in the Everybody Learns Initiative, the Connecticut Science Center has utilized their easily scalable CEN Internet service to reach more students and families.



#### What is the Connecticut Science Center?

The Connecticut Science Center is a nine-story museum located on the Connecticut River in Hartford, serving as a hub of innovation in hands-on science learning and exploration. In 2009, it transformed the landscape of Hartford with its unique architecture and family-oriented space dedicated to learning. With more than 165 hands-on exhibits, a state-of-the-art 3D digital theater, four educational labs, plus daily programs and events, the Connecticut Science Center offers endless exploration for children, teens, and adults. From physics to forensics, geology to astronomy, visitors have the sciences at their fingertips.

#### Quick Connectivity Facts



The Connecticut Science Center joined CEN	2009
2009 - 2018 CEN bandwidth utilization	10 - 50 Mbps
2019 - 2021 CEN bandwidth utilization	100 - 500 Mbps
Bandwidth usage growth	5,000%



"The Connecticut Science Center takes our role seriously as a trusted source for science content and information. We have served thousands of educators, students, and families online since March. Having an infrastructure to deliver these programs digitally is imperative for us to fulfill our mission and bridge the learning digital divide during this time of crisis."

**Matt Fleury**

Connecticut Science Center President and CEO

#### Adapting and Growing Virtual Programming

The 2020 pandemic accelerated the shift to virtual access for all aspects of day-to-day life, including education. With Connecticut's digital divide disproportionately affecting communities of color, students, and older adults, particularly in urban areas, the Connecticut Science Center has been well positioned to make a difference by providing expanded virtual programming and offering greater access through scholarships and low-cost memberships.

The Science Center's STEM in a Box and STEM Career Showcase programs illustrate

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their virtual programming growth. Designed for K-5 students, participants receive three weeks of STEM material for use in virtual activities with STEM educators.

The Science Center has made it simple for students to participate virtually, with the ability to engage directly with program educators through fun and interactive lessons.

The Science Center also hosts virtual STEM Career Showcases that bring together high school and junior high school students from across the state to enjoy keynote speakers from leaders describing their journey in pursuit of STEM education and careers.



"CEN's core mission is to provide our members the digital education superhighway they need to meet their program growth needs, and we are very proud of our partnership with the Connecticut Science Center."

**Paul Tarsa**

CEN Member Relations Manager

### *Participating in Connecticut's Everybody Learns Initiative*

With their participation in Governor Lamont's Everybody Learns Initiative, the Connecticut Science Center joined the effort to bring

broadband Internet access to the Hartford community. In partnership with CEN, the Science Center installed an outdoor, open-access WiFi hotspot to bring high-speed connectivity to visitors inside and out of the Center, which had already been taking steps to increase broadband access. Renovations to the plaza, atop the parking garage, converted the area into a beautiful, green, public space. The Everybody Learns service now supplements the existing WiFi access.

"We are thrilled to work alongside the Connecticut Science Center to bring Governor Lamont's 'Everybody Learns Initiative' to fruition. We have been working with the Science Center since their inception to help them use technology to drive their core mission- inspiring lifelong learning."

Enabling free internet access for children across Hartford to help them with their studies and to drive their interest in the STEM field fits perfectly in line with both the Science Center's mission as well as IT Direct's. We are proud to be a part of this partnership with CEN and know that the results of this work will truly benefit our children's future."

**Ari Santiago**

CompassMSP CEO

### *Benefiting from CEN Membership*

The Science Center's leap forward with virtual programming has been made possible with CEN connectivity. Unlike many other Internet service providers, CEN offers its members the ability to "burst" their connection speed as they need it for events. The available circuit speed of 1 Gbps meets the Science Center's connectivity needs at any time without any preparation, adjustments, or concern for additional cost. Recently, the Connecticut Science Center utilized CEN's Internet burst feature for speed increases up to 600 Mbps during prime time program delivery hours.

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