



IMPACT REPORT 2021 **VOICES FROM OUR COMMUNITY**

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Emerging stronger than ever.

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As our program grows, we continue to see the unique and vitally important relationship that the LGBTQIA2+ community has with technology. Our community adopts new technologies at almost twice the rate of non-LGBTQ+ individuals. We rely on a network of individuals, organizations, businesses, and events to connect with each other and build community empowerment. Technology brings this network closer together than ever. The challenges presented during COVID from 2020-21 drove home the power of connectivity that access to technology provides.

We listened to the voices of our community confirming how important tech is to our health and wellbeing. Without online connectivity, many LGBTQ+ organizations would have been unable to hold their communities together. That includes crucial services like peer-to-peer support groups, education, employment, and housing resources. The internet, the tech we use to access it, and the laws that govern it, are the backbone of our success during COVID and beyond.

Together with our network of 53 centers across 24 states plus Puerto Rico and Washington DC, PowerOn continues to deliver life-changing technology and connectivity resources where communities need it most. Since our foundation, we've incorporated a grassroots metrics lifecycle into the fabric of our program. Self-reported data allows us to meet our community where they are.

Thank you to our supporters.
Thank you to our PowerOn centers.
Together we are emerging stronger than ever.

Christopher B. Wood
Executive Director

POWERON SUPPORTERS



LGBT TECH LEADERSHIP



CHRISTOPHER WOOD
Executive Director



ELLIE BESSETTE
Director of Programs



CARLOS GUTIERREZ
General Counsel

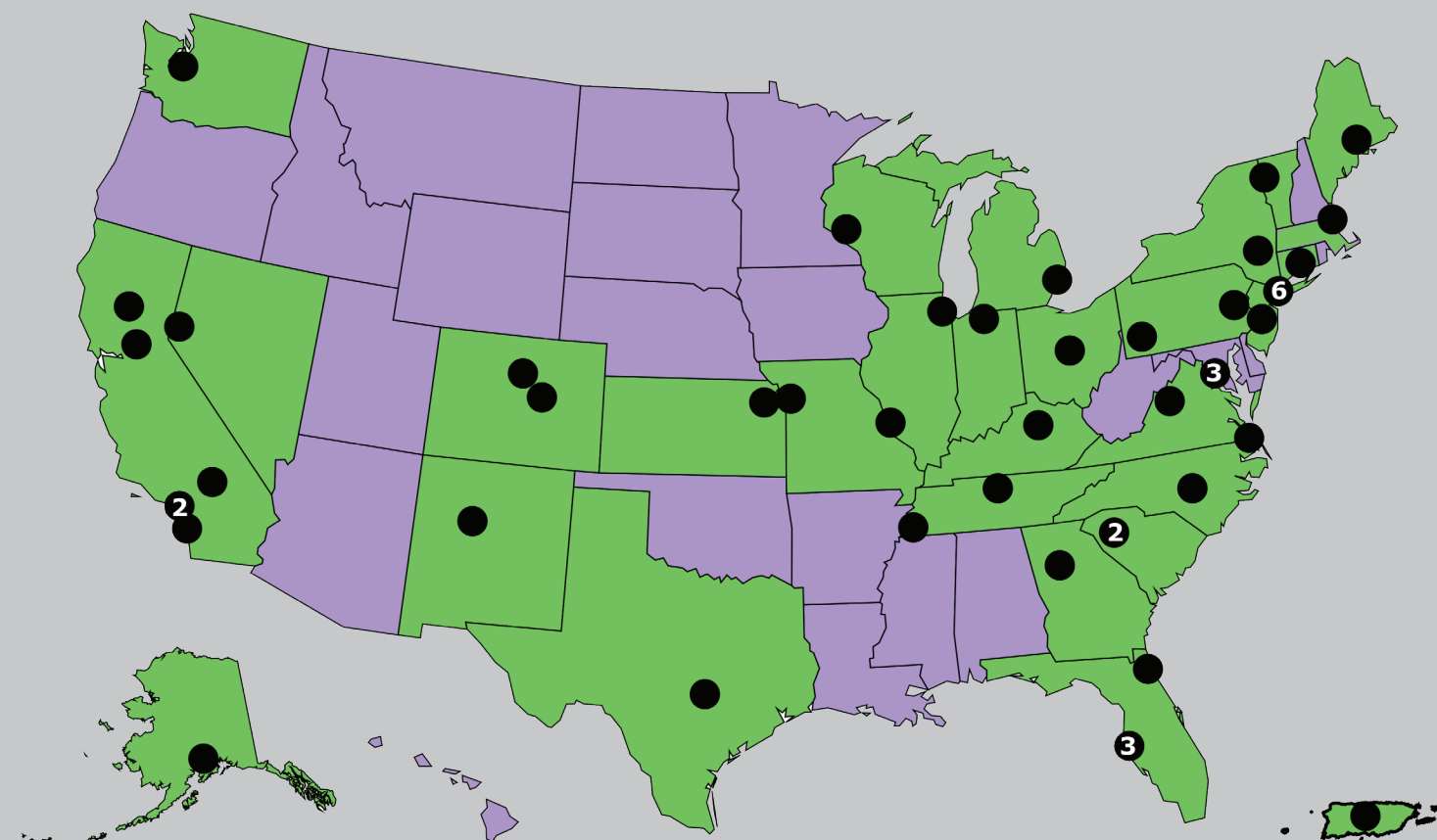


KRISTEN KELLEY
Programs & Communications
Manager

PowerOn

PowerOn provides brand new tech to partner LGBTQ+ centers where it is used in-center as well as distributed to individuals.

53 centers, **27** states + Puerto Rico and DC



WHY TECH?

Everywhere in the world, LGBTQ+ community members face social, cultural, and economic barriers to equality. Internet access and the technology required to go digital are crucial to connect to resources and raise our voices.

- **80%** of LGBTQ+ people socialize online compared to 58% of the general public¹
- **81%** of LGBTQ+ youth search for health information online¹
- **45%** of lesbian and bisexual women are not out to their health providers for fear of poor care; online health services are critical to the LGBTQ+ community for high-quality, equitable care¹
- **40%** of youth experiencing homelessness in America are LGBTQ+; LGBTQ+ people are more likely to live in poverty than heterosexual people; tech provides access to jobs, housing, and other resources to exit homelessness²
- Internet access helps LGBTQ+ people in rural areas to connect with each other, when there is often little access to physical LGBTQ+ spaces³
- The internet has become a crucial resource for both LGBTQ+ individuals looking to explore and understand their identities, and in educating allies in their communities who are committed to providing support and safe spaces³

PowerOn's national reach means that we work with individuals with a wide variety of experiences, including many living in locations where the LGBTQ+ community has been historically underserved. Because our program supports diverse experiences across the LGBTQ+ community, we empower our partner centers, who are working on the front-lines of serving our community, to tailor their technology use to meet their local community's most pressing needs.

Why tech? Because access to tech means access to housing, jobs, healthcare, community, and acceptance. With a national network, stronger connections are possible every day.

¹LGBT Technology Partnership & Institute (2014) *Vision for Inclusion: An LGBT Broadband Future*. <https://www.lgbttech.org/research>

²LGBT Technology Partnership & Institute. *Connect4Life*. <https://www.lgbtttech.org/research>

³Movement Advancement Project. April 2019. *Where We Call Home: LGBT People in Rural America*. www.lgbtmap.org/rural-lgbt

Our Mission

PowerOn is a first-of-a-kind program that distributes technology to housing-insecure, isolated, or disadvantaged LGBTQ+ individuals across the country through our network of LGBTQ+ grantee organizations. This grantee network (PowerOn Partner Centers) allows us to work on a national scale to distribute life-saving technology at the most impactful grassroots level, empowering individuals with the tools to take charge of their circumstances and tackle the digital divide head-on.

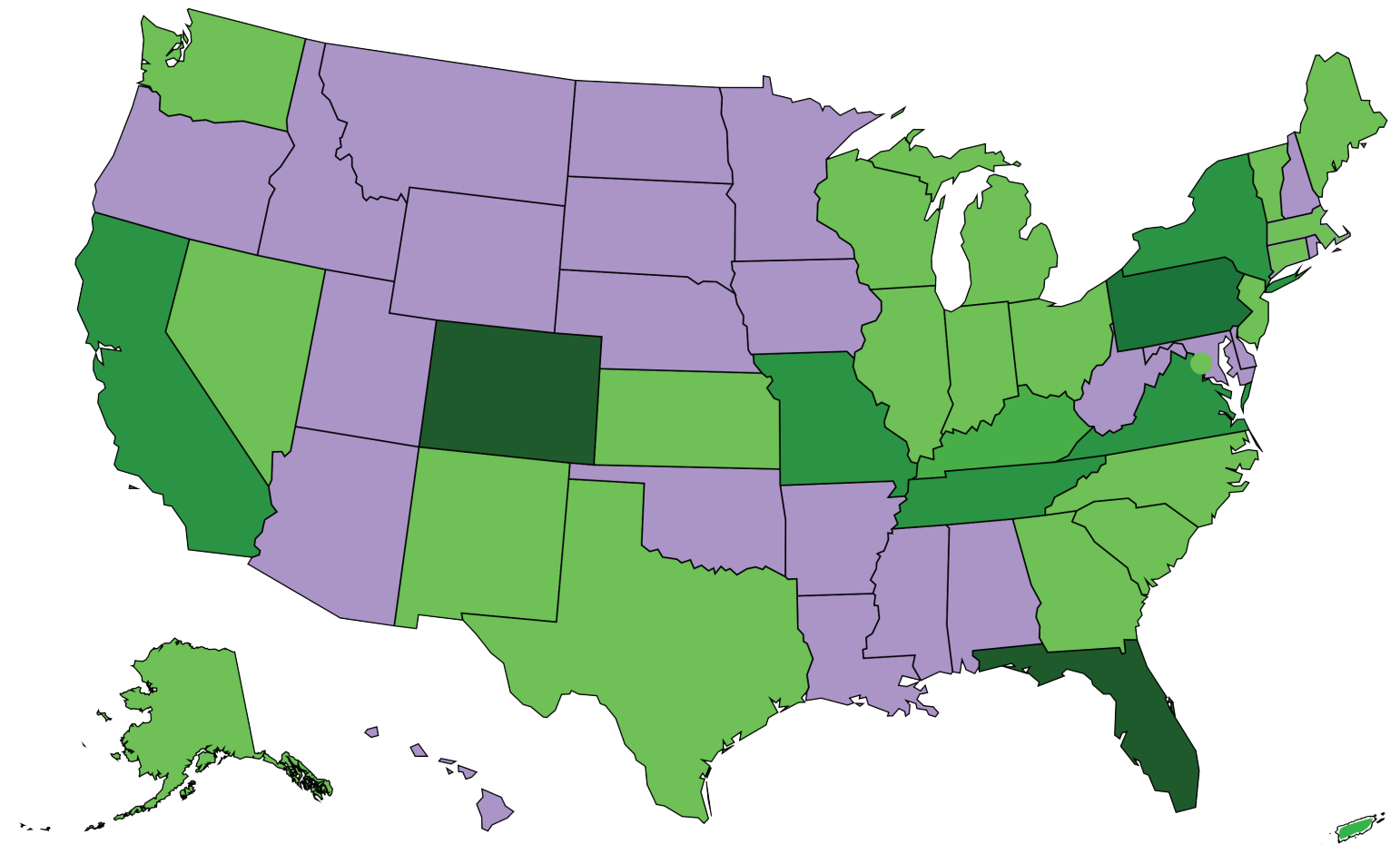
IMPACT IN 2021

From trans youth in rural towns to people living with HIV in cities, PowerOn-donated technology connects our communities to life-saving services and more equitable chances in life.

\$47,964 worth of granted technology distributed totaling
251 devices benefitting **74,788** individuals in 2021.

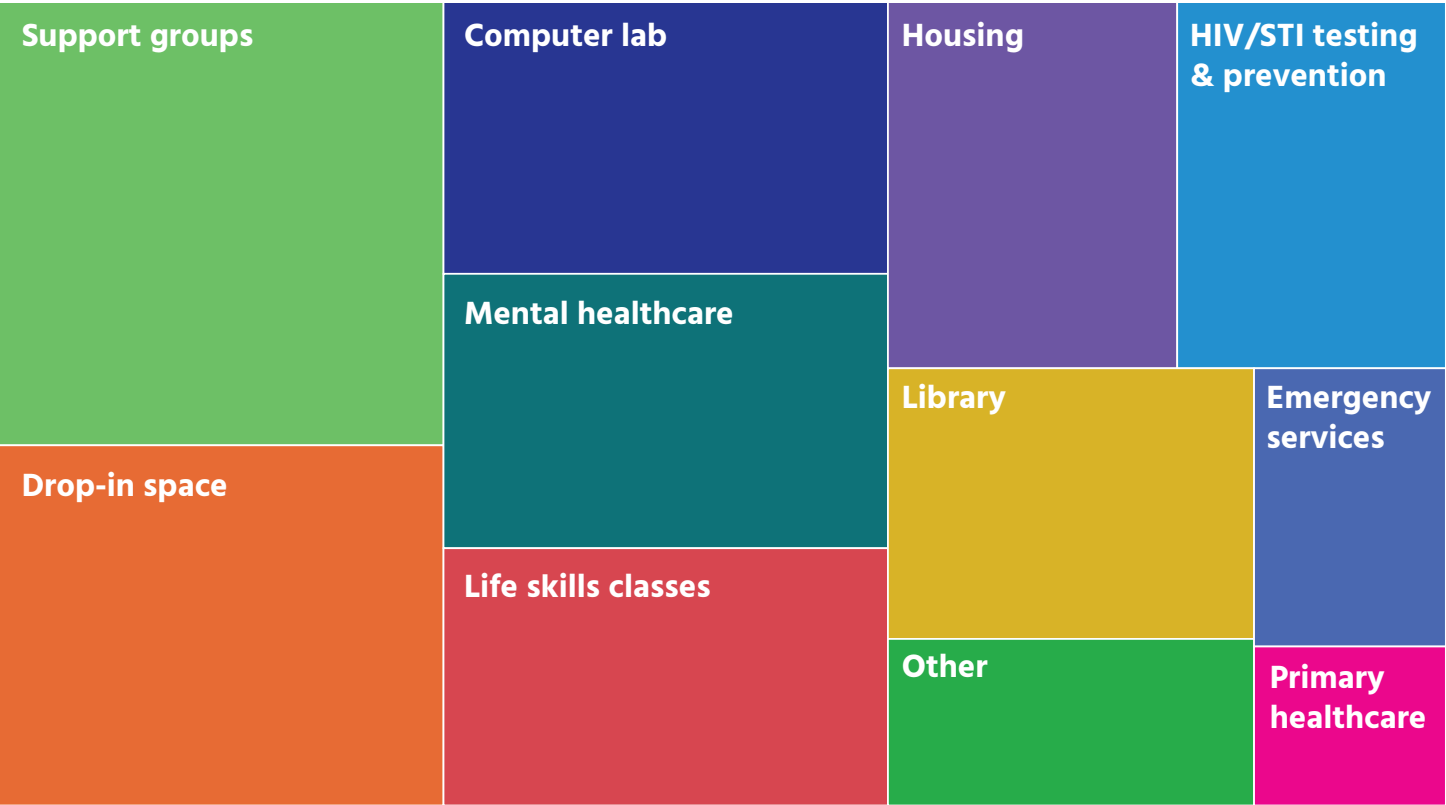
LGBTQ+ Population Served by State (DC + Puerto Rico)

● 1-499 ● 500-999 ● 1,000-4,999 ● 10,000-14,999 ● 15,000+ ● None currently



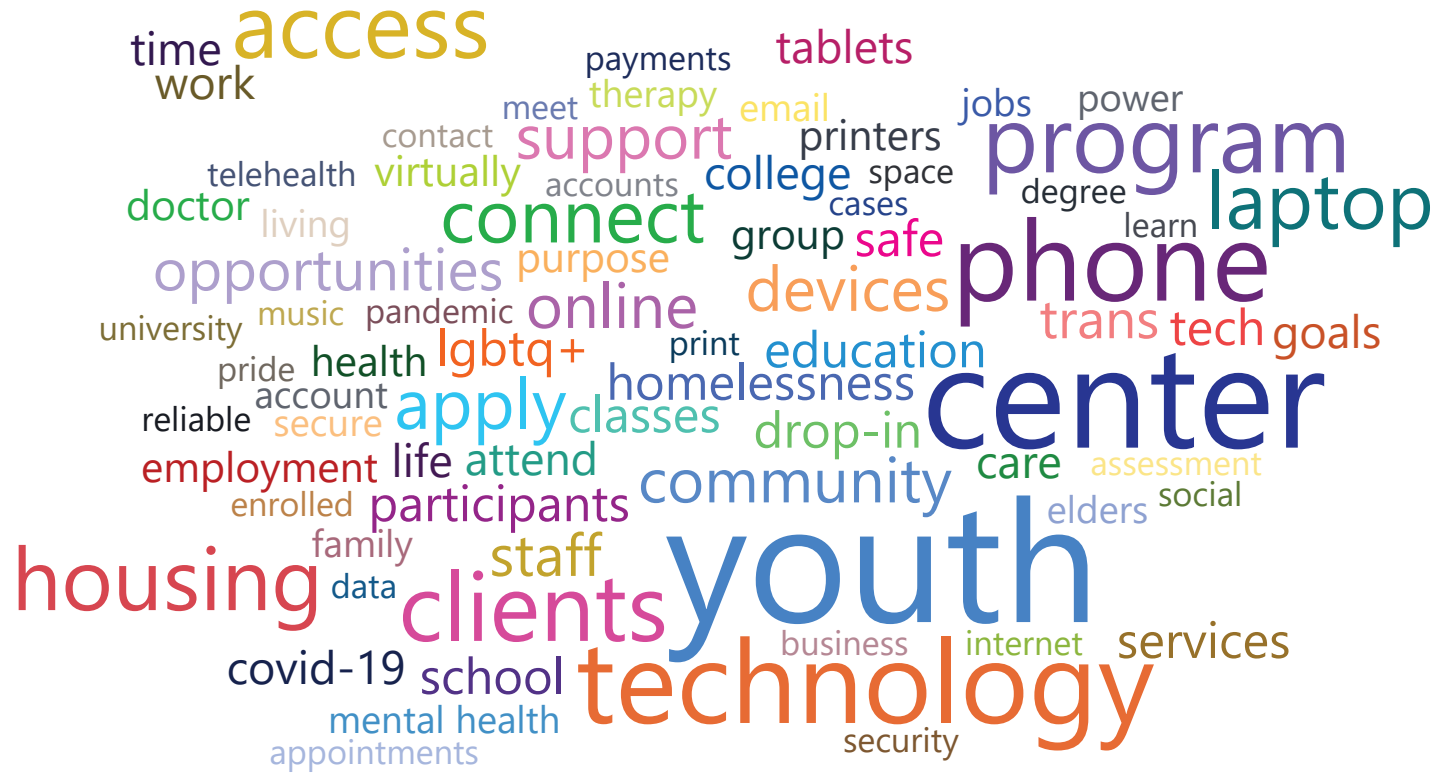


SERVICES OFFERED AT CENTERS



Larger rectangles represent more frequently offered service

HOW CENTERS ARE USING POWERON TECHNOLOGY



Larger text size represents more frequently mentioned word by centers

Key Outcomes

321 people used PowerOn technology each week

185 found stable housing

183 applied for a job

120 completed schoolwork

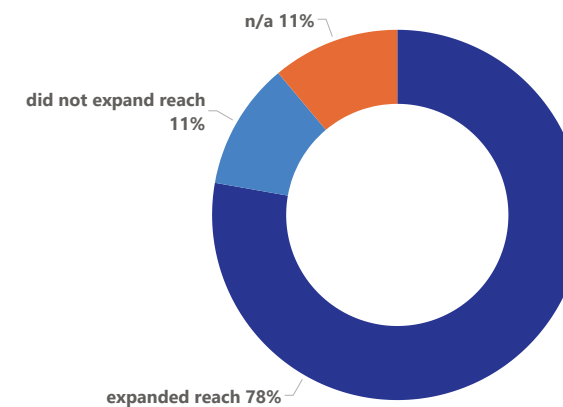
84 applied for school or got a GED

SOCIAL IMPACT

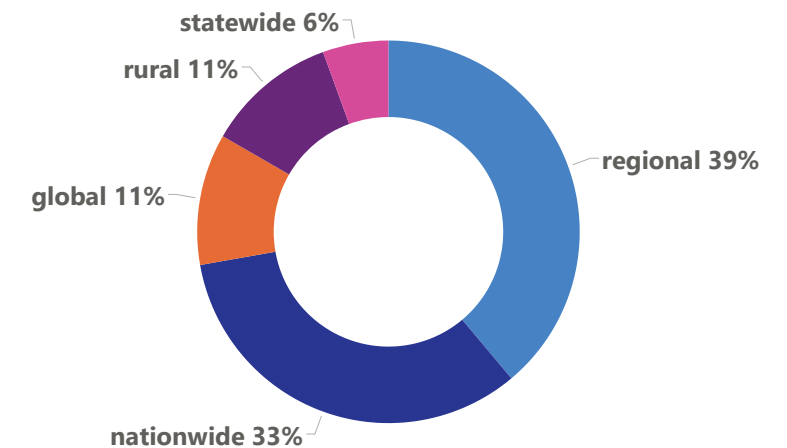
How is technology changing the lives of LGBTQ+ people? Finding employment, stable housing, and completing education have a direct effect on mental health, health and wellbeing, standard of living, self esteem, life satisfaction, and social & civic engagement. The outcomes of the PowerOn program are part of a transformative process that changes individual lives as well as LGBTQ+ communities.

EXPANDED REACH

78% of centers expanded the reach of their services with PowerOn technology

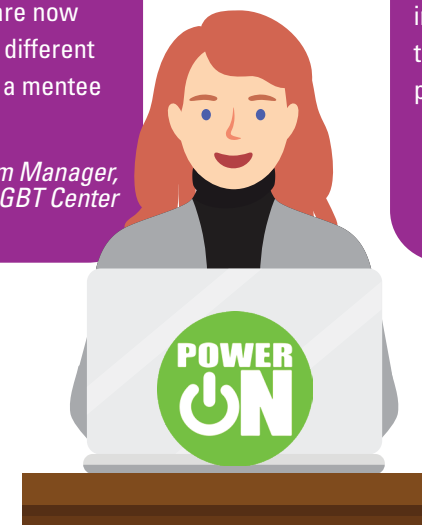


Nearly one-third of partner centers reported expanding programs to provide new virtual services which served LGBTQ+ participants nationwide in 2021



"Our mentoring program now has participants from all over the world! The ability to easily communicate with folks outside of our immediate vicinity has allowed us to add to our mentor and mentee database in a way we never could have done before. We are now connecting people that live in different states, and even just enrolled a mentee that lives in Mumbai!"

—Mandy Litwin, Program Manager, LA LGBT Center



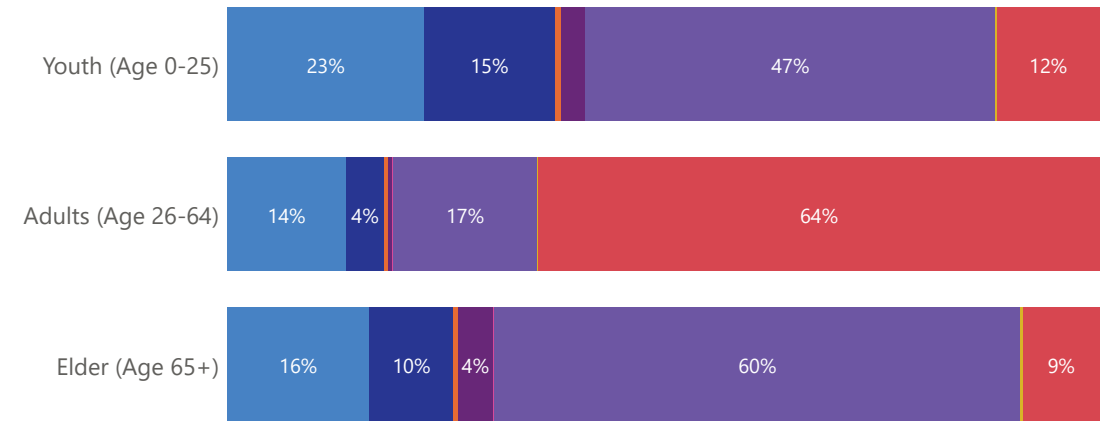
"The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to use technology in new ways, including fully virtual meetings and hybrid meetings. This has allowed us to expand our reach exponentially, especially in serving at-risk trans youth in places as far away as Brazil and the UK. We definitely consider this a positive outcome of the pandemic."

—James Giessler, Executive Director/CEO, North Shore Alliance of LGBTQ+ Youth (NAGLY)



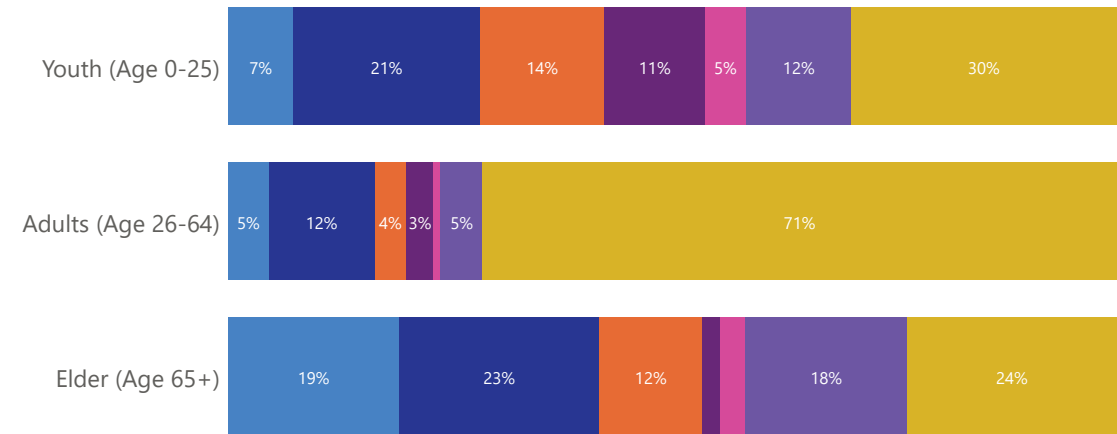
RACE BY AGE GROUP

Black or African-American Hispanic/Latinx American Indian or Alaskan Natives Asian Middle Eastern or North African White Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Another Race or Ethnic Group



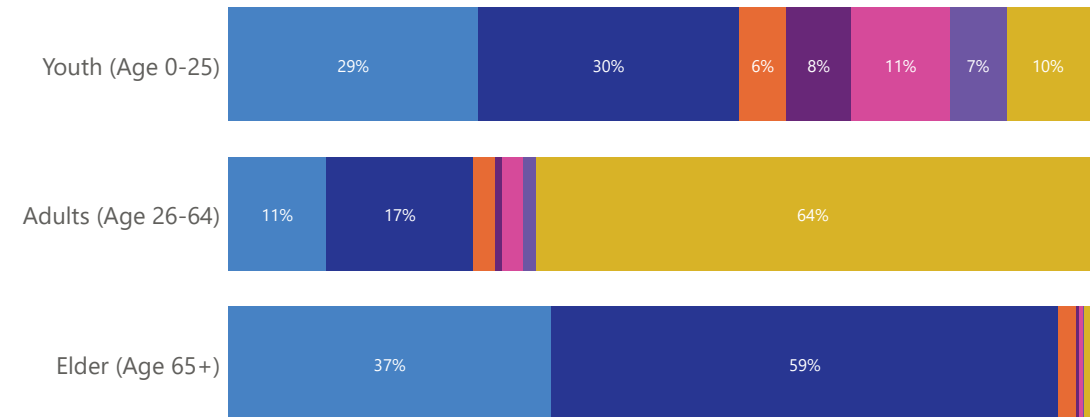
SEXUAL ORIENTATION BY AGE GROUP

Lesbian Gay Bisexual Queer Questioning Straight Other



GENDER BY AGE

Women Men Trans Women Trans Men Genderqueer/Non conforming Nonbinary Other



Note: Over-representation of "other" categories in Adults is a result of response bias. We are working to improve data collection for clearer self-reporting from centers.



Impact Spotlight

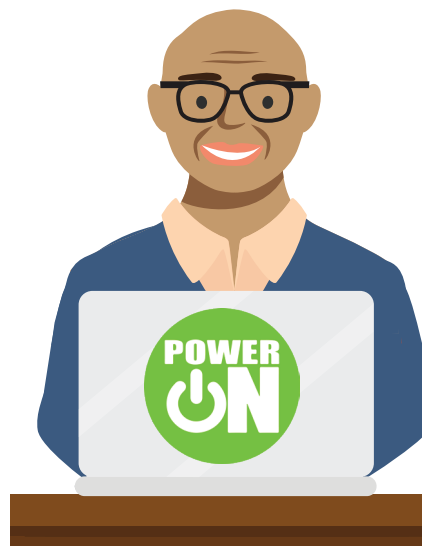
Waves Ahead is a PowerOn Partner serving the LGBTQ+ community in Puerto Rico. Waves Ahead manages four community centers across Puerto Rico, which provide mental health services via SAGE Puerto Rico, advocacy, inclusivity training, microlending, a weekly radio show, and services to the LGBTQ+ community with a focus on older adults.

MEET: Wilfred

*Wilfred Labiosa, Executive Director
Waves Ahead & SAGE Puerto Rico*

"There was so much isolation here in Puerto Rico for the longest time. After 11 months of lockdown quarantine, we had restrictions and could not open the centers. We didn't start to live a little until December of 2021. It was restricted for two years. To connect again was just amazing for our community. We depended on tech to stay connected. **Technology is our savior.**

Without technology, we would have closed. I would not have been able to solicit funds or support saying that we're still providing life-saving services. That phrase. I simply would not have been able to say it."



MEET: Dianne Michelle

*Dianne Michelle Trinidad
Peer Community Leader, Waves Ahead*

"This is personal. I'm seventy-three years old. When I was diagnosed as HIV-positive in 1995, I locked myself away in my room. Later, I learned to speak about my diagnosis publicly to remove that stigma. I became a Peer Community Leader because the center has taken me by the hand to help me. I want to help others who need it, too.

During the pandemic, those of us with compromised immunity had to be extremely careful. Our bodies were already compromised with HIV, some with cancer, and being older adults without access to vaccines. We didn't know if we could survive face-to-face meetings. All this technology helped us communicate.

Many people didn't have the support to speak with a doctor or a social worker. With Zoom, MS Teams, and web documents we could reach out to tell people about their condition. We had virtual workshops. We called people and saved their phone numbers in order to get food boxes out to them. **Technology can change so many lives.**"



***“Estoy aprendiendo
más de la tecnología de
las computadoras para
empoderarme.***

**I’m learning more about
computer technology
to empower myself.”**

—Dianne Michelle Trinidad

Voices from Our Community

“Young people who utilized PowerOn technology were using phones, which helped them make appointments for things like job interviews, medical appointments, and other types of consultations.”

*—Jen Kuhn,
Director of Community Partnerships & External Relations,
Kaleidoscope Youth Center, Columbus, OH*

“The technology has helped them to stay in care and connect with providers to ensure that they are staying the course to achieve optimal health.”

*—Ramatoulaye Keita,
Community Health Manager,
Whitman-Walker Health,
Washington, D.C.*

“Having access to a phone that is pre-programmed with agency phone numbers has been integral to some safety plans for youth who were fleeing domestic or dating violence, and for at least one youth who fled trafficking.”

*—Sarah Woodard,
Director of Development
& Communications,
Spectrum Youth & Family Services,
Burlington, VT*



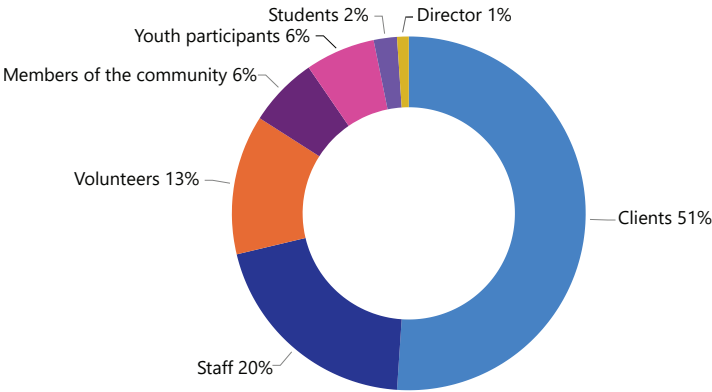


PowerOn Mini Grant Program

In late 2020 PowerOn launched the Mini Grant Program as an urgent COVID response to keep partner centers operational. In 2021, the program was extended due to the normalization of hybrid online/ in-person programming.

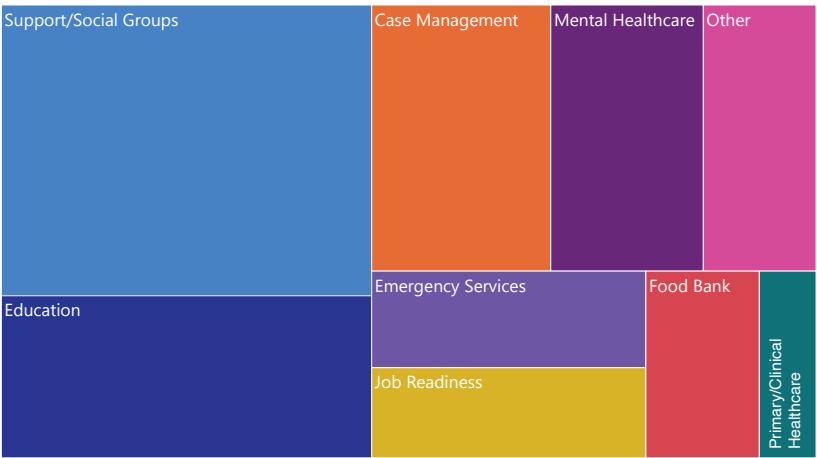
17,202 people served through Mini Grant technology

WHO USED MINI GRANT TECHNOLOGY



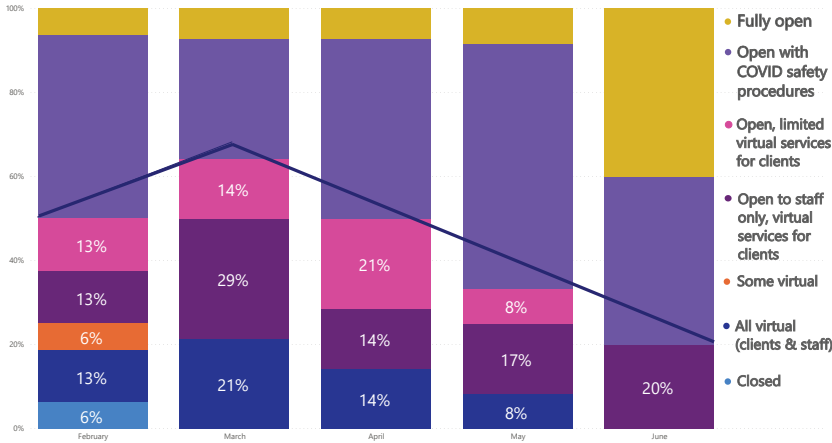
at least **41%** of PowerOn partner centers continue to offer virtual services.

SERVICES PROVIDED USING MINI GRANT TECH



Larger rectangles represent more frequently offered service

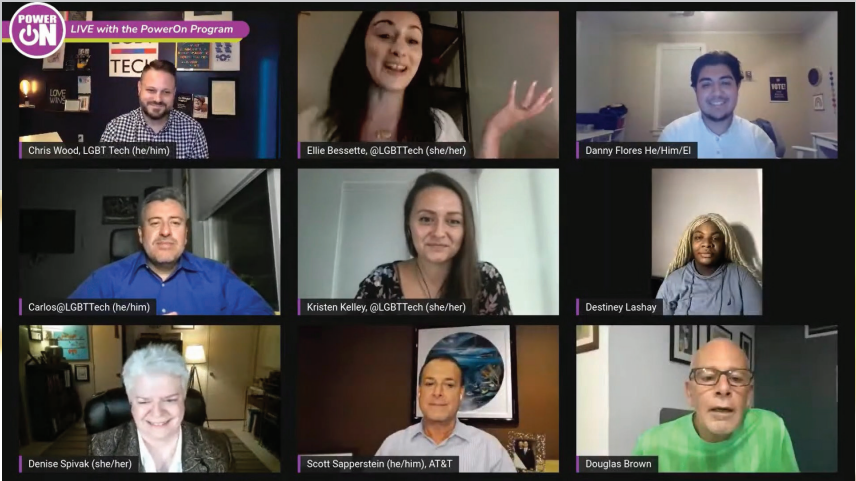
VIRTUAL SERVICES DURING THE PANDEMIC



PowerOn Awards Ceremony 2021 WINNERS

The 3rd Annual PowerOn Awards Ceremony 2021

Honoring individuals and organizations within the PowerOn program whose tireless work keeps LGBTQ+ communities connected to the resources they need.



The virtual event was live-streamed September 30, 2021.
<https://www.poweronlgbt.org/poweron-awards-ceremony-2021>



ROLE MODEL AWARD (WINNER)

Danny Flores
Harriet Hancock Center
Center client
Columbia, SC

“We’re brilliant and we are the future, so to all the other young leaders out there, thank you all for the work that you’ve done and let’s keep doing it.”



ROLE MODEL AWARD (RUNNER UP)

Destiney Lashay
OUTMemphis
Center client
Memphis, TN

“I want to thank OUTMemphis for giving me that guidance to let me know I don’t always have to be on the rougher side. I can be more open to who I am and more receptive to the love that I can get from my community.”



TRAILBLAZER AWARD

Douglas Brown
Waves Ahead and SAGE
Center client
San Juan, Puerto Rico

“We can still have much better hope for the future for those of us that have been somewhat disabled throughout our lives.”



VISIONARY AWARD

Scott Sapperstein
AT&T
Vice President, Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.

“I believe in the power of connections and during the past two years we’ve seen the importance of access to tech and the internet... It can be that life line that guides an LGBTQ+ young person through a period of crisis.”



SUPERSTAR CENTER AWARD

Wilfred W. Labiosa
Waves Ahead
Founder and Executive Director
San Juan, Puerto Rico

“[This award] means a lot to us as we immerse ourselves in technology without prior experience or being so techy. In less than a week we needed to transfer all of our programming into cyberspace with HIPAA compliant platforms that are so easy to use. Thank you to PowerOn, we were able to get all of this running in less than a week.”



CHANGE AGENT

Denise Spivak
CenterLink
CEO
Fort Lauderdale, FL

“I want to dedicate the award to CenterLink staff and to our network of almost 300 LGBTQ community centers who are using technology in the best ways possible to provide services, support, programming and resources to LGBTQ communities across the country and around the world. You all are true change agents and you all are my heroes.”



DAWN WAGES

Product Manager & Python Developer Advocate



PATHS Season 2

OUR VISION

In today's digital age, uplifting LGBTQ+ voices means ensuring that our community is connected.

Last year, PowerOn's mission was all about ensuring connectivity for LGBTQ+ communities during a global pandemic. We accomplished our goals by listening and meeting our community where they were and providing the technical resources to allow them to flourish in beautiful ways. With the world reopening, we are keeping the fight for digital inclusion at the forefront of our work but expanding our vision with increased development and innovation.

DEVELOPMENT

We constantly hear that LGBTQ+ communities need to be considered and counted in the tech world. As experts in technology, we wholeheartedly understand the importance of LGBTQ+ visibility and representation in tech for the products being created today and the workforce of tomorrow. This is why we recognize the importance of applying DEI concepts across all science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) fields.

PATHS is an exciting initiative to engage LGBTQ+ communities in STEAM. In addition to our current PATHS videos, we plan to launch a grant program, mentorship workshops, live and virtual events, and a podcast. PATHS gives us a way to empower current LGBTQ+ STEAM professionals to tell their story as a way to foster inclusivity and LGBTQ+ development in STEAM industries.

INNOVATION

Quarantine taught us a lesson. LGBTQ+ community spaces in social media and virtual reality are crucial. Next year we join with innovative partners to explore creative work in extended reality (XR).

This year we pivoted from survival to strength. We celebrate the connections that sustained us. Looking ahead, we seek to amplify our voices and advance the conversation more than ever.

VISION

The PowerOn program continues to grow as we listen to our community and its unique and diverse needs. We are determined to develop a deep understanding of the various access barriers that the LGBTQ+ community faces when it comes to connectivity, and to work to remove these barriers. We are committed to empowering those who provide life-saving and life-changing services to our community by providing them with the tools necessary to continue to do their work. We continue our commitment to uplift the voices of our community by working towards a world in which all LGBTQ+ individuals are connected by providing access to the technology that makes connectivity possible.



lgbttech.org | poweronprogram.org