



RURAL
technology fund

Beyond the Blueprint



LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Lately, it seems that life is a persistent struggle to find meaning amongst everything the world puts in front of us. Never have more voices competed for our attention. And yet, through the noise, there are signals.

Across rural communities, there are students with extraordinary potential... curious, capable, and motivated. But too often, they aren't heard. Even today, with all the systems and pathways created to amplify these voices, it's challenging for students' preparation to meet with opportunity.

This year, we've been fortunate to help link these signals and make meaningful connections that will change the future for young people, their families, and their communities. To date, we've now helped over 250,000 students access technology education across nearly 900 classrooms.

A few project highlights from our year include:

- In Los Lunas, NM, Ms. Sanchez brought Sphero minis to her STEM lab program at the library so students could learn coding, including directional commands, loop blocks, and timing adjustments.
- In Federalsburg, MD, Mr. Robuck's cybersecurity students built two functioning computers and then turned them into servers.
- In New London, NH, Ms. Corbyn's students are working with Ozobots, most recently on a unit about the solar system.
- In Beloit, KS, Mr. Deneke's students are busy building their TETRIS dual control robots for their introduction to robotics.

In addition to our technology education initiatives, we've made great strides in our assistive technology work, which seeks to help students with disabilities access technology education opportunities. Since adding Assistive Tech to our mission at the beginning of 2022, we've grown our impact and increased accessibility for so many students with disabilities. In 2025 alone, we provided access to AT solutions for 411 students. Without these tools, many rural students face the very real possibility of moving through school without ever having full access to their education, and carrying those limitations into adulthood.

Every student we reach is made possible by the support of educators, volunteers, partners, and donors like you.

Thank you for helping us make a few signals brighter.

Chris Sanders
Founder & Executive Director

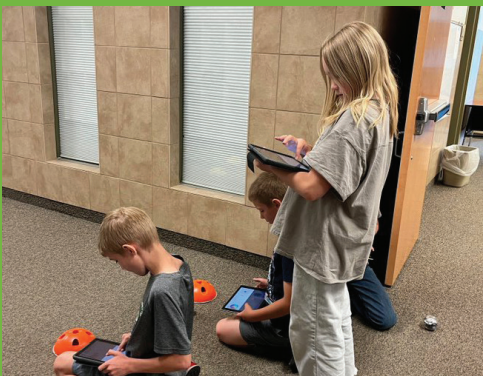
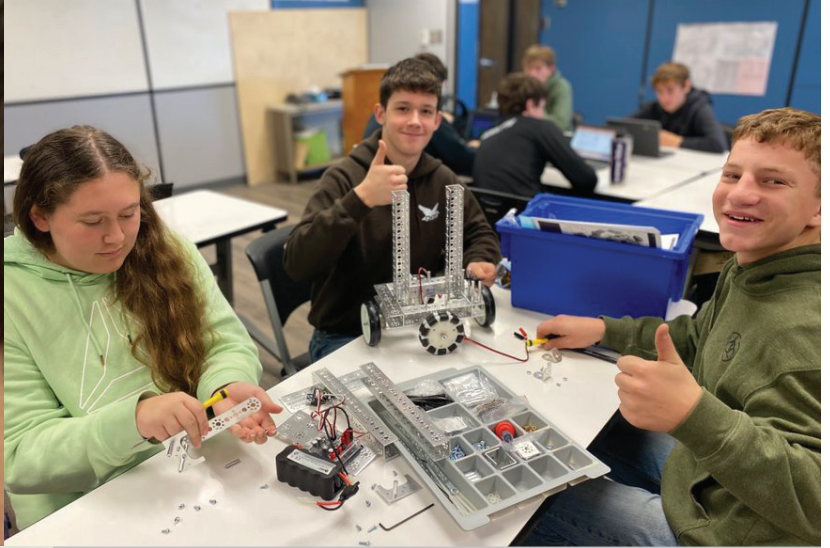
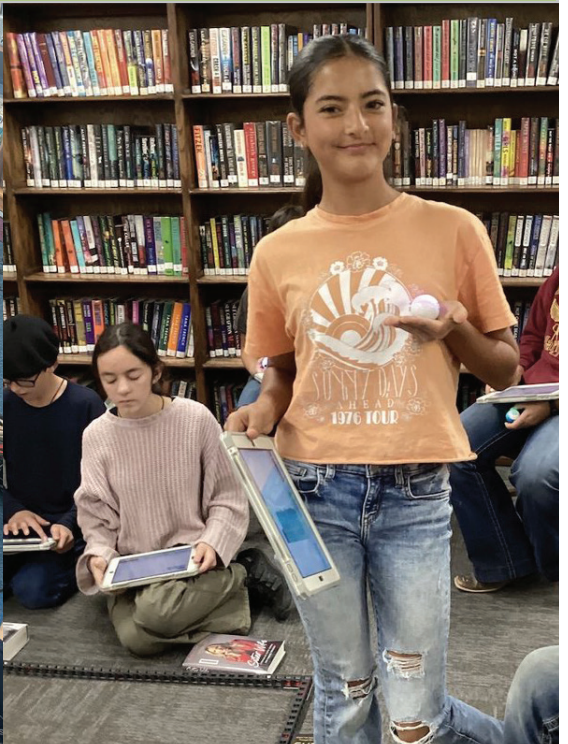


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The mission of the RTF is to help rural students recognize opportunities in technology careers, facilitate pathways to work in the computer industry, and provide equitable access to technology for students with disabilities.



WOLVES IN SPACE



Two educators in Newport, VT, led a hands-on project combining 3D design and rocket science. Below, educator Aaron Miller writes firsthand about their experience.

The stars aligned for grade 6 students at Newport Elementary School (NCES) when an RTF grant-funded Bambu X1 carbon printer collided with a Toshiba America Foundation rocket grant. This spawned an idea between Liam Gannon, Grade 6 science/social studies teacher, and district STEM coach, Aaron Miller: to have students learn the engineering and design cycle by creating 3D rockets in TinkerCad and then launch them to study their flight characteristics using Estes A3-2T mini engines.

We hooked the students by introducing the recent space race between the US, India, China and Russia. We used the SpaceX Starships launches as a great example of failure in engineering and the importance of perseverance.



Liam has three rotations of grade 6 students. He differentiated the criteria and constraints for each group. For one group, students came to an agreement regarding criteria for the mission and the constraints. We test-launched and measured a few teacher-made 3D printed rockets so students could get an idea of the factors at play with this project. They developed three mission criteria: (1) launch and return a Lego person unharmed; (2) the rocket must reach at least 125 feet high; (3) the rocket must have a flight time of at least 4 seconds. The other two classes used teacher-created criteria and constraints scaffolded to help them succeed.



Students worked through a project template to describe the problem, state their criteria and constraints, and to begin designing. Rocket part shapes are actually pretty simple and they quickly began creating different prototypes. Students were trained on TinkerCad using a few of their tutorials and direct instruction to show them how to create and manipulate their rockets.

Students shared their TinkerCad designs with Liam and he printed the rockets. We used one Bambu X1 Carbon and three Dremel DigiLab printers to keep up. Once the first prototypes were finished, we began launching rockets. We used an Estes Alti-trak to measure the angle to the highest point for each rocket and recorded each launch to get the flight time. Classes that had Lego person retrieval were safety checked to make sure their Lego person came back safe.

Students used their first prototype performance, recorded on their engineering reports, to redesign and improve their rockets. Most students were able to get a second prototype finished and launched. The Estes A3-2T engines are small enough to be used on a small playground but go high enough (if your rocket is well designed) to really impress.



This project is a powerful reminder of what's possible when educators pair creativity with the right tools and support. We're grateful to Aaron, Liam, and the NCES team for sharing their process and for showing how hands-on STEM learning can inspire curiosity, perseverance, and real-world problem solving.

We have very exciting news to share! Rural Tech Fund is proud to partner with Make48 to bring a meaningful new opportunity to students in rural Kansas and western Missouri. This project is supported in part by a 2025 grant from The Patterson Family Foundation. Through this partnership, we will expand Make48's Innovation Classroom Experience to up to 40 public schools to support educators with training, curriculum, and hands-on design challenges that spark creativity, collaboration, and real-world problem-solving. Students will work in teams to design, prototype, and pitch innovative solutions to real challenges, building both technical skills and confidence along the way.



Rural Tech Fund will provide microgrants to participating schools so students have the tools and technology they need to fully engage and compete. These grants will help classrooms purchase materials, technology, and supplies that bring student ideas to life. Having the right tools changes everything, and this project helps us get them into more classrooms.

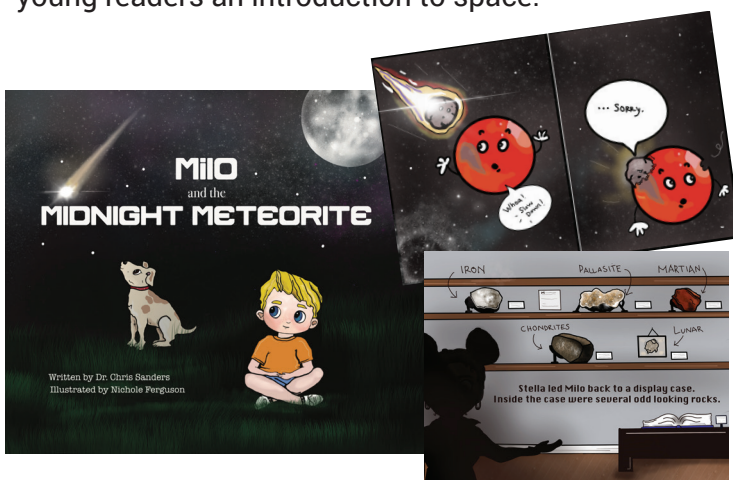
This partnership represents a major step forward for our work and for the communities we serve. Together with Make48 and The Patterson Family Foundation, we are not just expanding a program: we are helping students see themselves as innovators, problem-solvers, and future leaders while creating more pathways for rural communities to access meaningful hands-on learning opportunities.



MILO AND THE MIDNIGHT METEORITE

A children's book written by Chris Sanders and illustrated by Nichole Ferguson

Milo and the Midnight Meteorite follows a curious young boy who sets out to find a glowing object he sees streak across the night sky. As he searches, Milo learns how to identify a real meteorite and is introduced to the science behind these space rocks, including where they come from and what makes them unique. Blending storytelling with real scientific concepts, the book offers young readers an introduction to space.



At its heart, the story is about wonder and discovery, encouraging children to ask questions, explore the world around them, and think beyond what they can see. We are donating copies to rural schools and libraries so more students can learn about the science of space!

You can purchase your own copy at <http://milosmeteorite.com>

OUR IMPACT



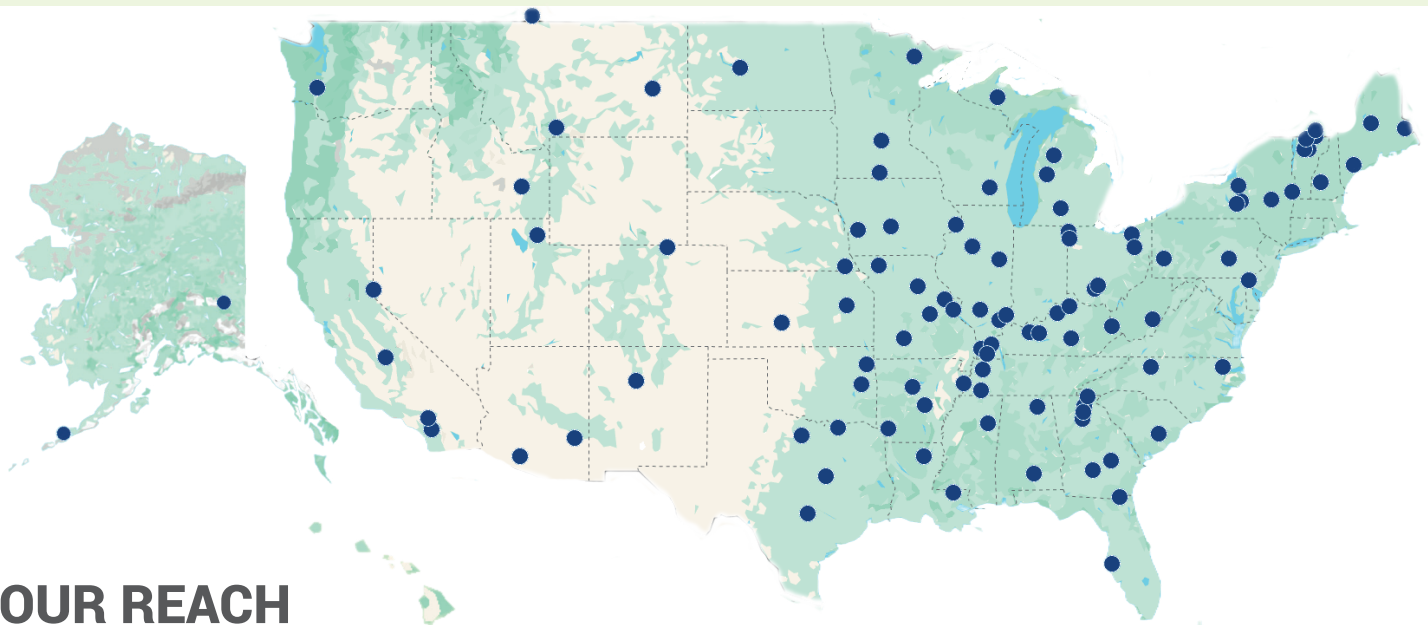
In 2025, the RTF placed

tech education resources into the hands of **28,482** students

assistive technology resources into the hands of **411** students

in a total of **107** schools and libraries

Bringing our total number of impacted students to **241,934**



OUR REACH

The locations below represent where we provided technology education resources and assistive technology to rural classrooms and libraries this year.

King Cove, AK
Mentasta Lake, AK
Andalusia, AL
Douglas, AL
Bigelow, AR
Pine Bluff, AR
Fouke, AR
GuVo, AZ
Thatcher, AZ
Tulare, CA
Valley Center, CA
South Lake Tahoe, CA
Menifee, CA
Fort Collins, CO
Smyrna, DE
Macclenny, FL
Sarasota, FL
Conyers, GA
Flowery Branch, GA
Lawrenceville, GA
Cleveland, GA

Tifton, GA
Hazlehurst, GA
Carson, IA
Swea City, IA
Martensdale, IA
Pocatello, ID
Marquette Heights, IL
Tamaroa, IL
Coal Valley, IL
Junction, IL
Champaign, IL
North Pekin, IL
Mount Vernon, IN
Seneca, KS
Hartford, KS
Greensburg, KS
Hickman, KY
Mayfield, KY
Spencerville, KY
Pikeville, KY
Burnside, KY

Morgantown, KY
Edmonson, KY
Stamping Ground, KY
Columbia, LA
Albany, LA
Columbia, LA
Portland, ME
Princeton, ME
Guilford, ME
Union City, MI
Grant, MI
Crystal Falls, MI
LeRoy, MI
Virginia, MN
Gaylord, MN
Boone County, MO
Sparta, MO
Maysville, MO
Rolla, MO
Washington, MO
Desoto, MO

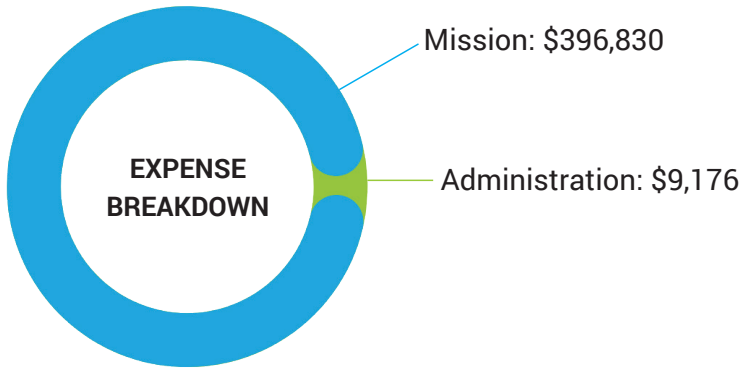
Starkville, MS
Ashland, MS
Sunburst, MT
Miles City, MT
Gardiner, MT
Cooleemee, NC
Jamesville, NC
Center, ND
Antrim, NH
Rio Rancho, NM
Whitney Point, NY
LaFayette, NY
Newark Valley, NY
Berlin, NY
Gilboa, NY
Springfield Akron, OH
Antwerp, OH
Convoy, OH
Peebles, OH
Zoarville, OH
Latham, OH

Tahlequah, OK
Kinta, OK
 Elizabethtown, PA
 Monessen, PA
 Summerville, SC
 Bells, TN
 Memphis, TN
 Martin, TN
 Lott, TX
 Graford, TX
 Seguin, TX
 Blue Ridge, TX
 Morgan, UT
 Montpelier, VA
 Moretown, VT
 Glover, VT
 Johnson, VT
 Newport, VT
 Toledo, WA
 Whitewater, WI
 Ronceverte, WV

RTF FINANCIALS AT A GLANCE

TOTAL INCOME AND CONTRIBUTIONS:
\$523,723

TOTAL EXPENSES:
\$406,066



GuideStar



SUPPORTING PARTNERS

Revolution Tier (\$20,000+)



Blackthorne



Innovation Tier (\$10,000+)



Opportunity Tier (\$5,000+)



COMMUNITY PARTNERS





How to Help

Your donation will go directly to supporting rural and economically disadvantaged students by providing computer science and engineering equipment, curriculum, scholarships, and assistive technology in classrooms and libraries across the country.



One Time
Donation With
Paypal



Recurring
Donations With
Patreon



One Time
Donation By
Check



One Time
Donation
Online

Support Our Cause at www.ruraltechfund.org/donate

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