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# NOYN Newsletter

Newark Opportunity Youth Network (NOYN) is New Jersey's leading advocate of opportunity youth with a body of replicable initiatives that are designed to address youth disconnection. NOYN's work is organized around four key elements of Education, Workforce Development, Policy Advocacy, and Systems Building.

Read how NOYN's initiatives are working together to re-engage opportunity youth while drastically changing systems that inhibit their success.



## LEAD Charter School reopens for in-person instruction, Inspire Diagnostics provides Covid-19 testing

LEAD Charter School, the education arm of Newark Opportunity Youth Network (NOYN), is entering Phase 2 of its reopening plan starting April 19. To ensure students and staff remain in a safe and healthy learning environment, LEAD is collaborating with Inspire Diagnostics to administer Covid tests to support LEAD's return to in-person education.

Starting, April 19, LEAD reopened at 40% capacity, or about 70-80 young people in the building per day. Inspire Diagnostics will provide Covid screenings and rapid tests with trained technicians on-site at the 201 Bergen location. PCR test results are guaranteed within 24-48 hours, with rapid test results in as little as 15 minutes. [Read the full story below.](#)

[Read more](#)



**“** Every student deserves a school community that wants to see them succeed. A place that supports your mental health, your social-emotional health and gives you the tools you need to be the best version of yourself. **”**

## I'm more than my mistakes | Opinion

LEAD Charter School is helping young people transform their lives each and every day. One of those young people, So'Nya Jordan, used her story of transformation to inspire an op-ed posted to [NJ.com](#), [the74million.org](#) and [Yahoo News](#) on the role education plays against crime prevention.

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## Moving Newark forward: La Casa de Don Pedro's \$1.4 million program helps families pay back back-rent

La Casa de Don Pedro of Newark is helping residents get debt-free through its Back Rental Assistance program. Thanks to a \$1.4 million donation, La Casa is providing financial assistance to Newark working households to pay back months of unpaid rent so they can move forward from the COVID-19 crisis, debt free.

On March 19, 2020, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy issued an executive order suspending all evictions throughout the state. The “eviction moratorium” guaranteed, excluding rare circumstances, that no tenant could be removed from their home through eviction. However, the order did not prevent the accumulation of back-rent. After a year in the pandemic, [the eviction moratorium is expected to end mid-June](#), and the state has not announced a formal plan to address residents’ inevitable debt caused by employment disruption and delinquent payments.

With [1.8 million New Jerseyans unemployed since the start of the pandemic](#), many have accumulated a large debt of back-pay with no plan on how to pay it back. La Casa’s rental assistance program is geared to households who have regained steady employment and are going back to work.

“We work with households who, since losing their jobs due to Covid, have now returned to work so they’re able to sustain their apartment and their homes, but they may have thousands of dollars over their heads in back-rent due,” said [Carrie Puglisi](#), Director of Program and Fund Development for La Casa de Don Pedro.

“Knowing that folks have some level of hope that they can stay where they are and we can be there to help them has offered a great deal of relief.” [Read the full story below.](#)

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## South Ward Promise Neighborhood gifts 50 laptops to bridge the technology divide

To help bridge the technology divide in Newark’s South Ward, South Ward Promise Neighborhood (SWPN), an initiative of the BRICK Education Network, graciously gifted 50 new Dell Chromebooks to Newark Opportunity Youth Network (NOYN). Students at LEAD Charter School, the education initiative of NOYN, will receive the laptops, not only to use for the school year, but to keep for continued learning.

The devices were provided by the Take on Race “One Million Devices Now” campaign and in collaboration with Harlem Children’s Zone and BRICK Education Network in response to Covid 19. As a recipient, BRICK was able to purchase brand new Dell Chromebook laptops to distribute to students and families in need of technological assistance. The pandemic has illuminated the digital divide in Newark, so the laptop distribution was designed to provide access and opportunities to families across the city.

SWPN gifted 50 Chromebooks to NOYN’s program participants, specifically young people who live in the South Ward, to meet today’s need. But instead of returning these laptops at the end of the school year, young people can keep these laptops for years to come. [Read the full story below.](#)

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