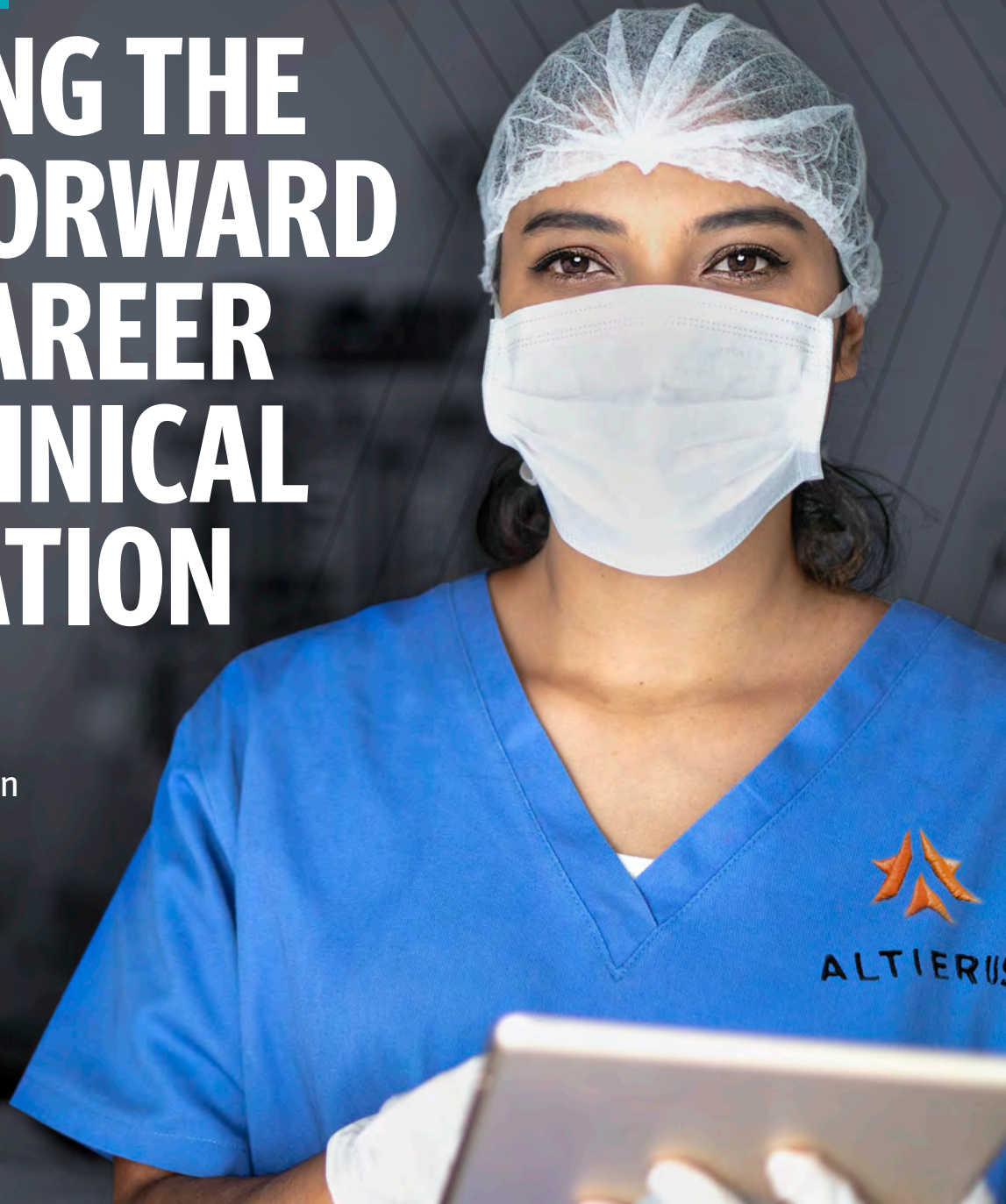


**2020 ANNUAL REPORT**

# LEADING THE WAY FORWARD FOR CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

A Year of Triumph  
Over Challenge:  
Renewing Our Vision  
of the Future







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# OVERVIEW

ECMC Education is a nonprofit provider of educational solutions rooted in innovation, employer collaboration and industry stewardship to generate superior learner outcomes. The organization operates Altierus Career College—a network of career and technical schools delivering allied health and skilled trades programs—and offers a range of direct-to-employer training solutions through Altierus Training Solutions. By pioneering a robust, technology-enabled educational model that holistically serves learners and connects them to in-demand careers with strong earning potential, ECMC Education seeks to lead the way forward in career and technical education (CTE).

ECMC Education is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and has campus locations in Houston, Texas; Atlanta, Georgia; and Tampa, Florida.

# MISSION

Transform career and technical education to provide aspiring and current learners with skills to elevate their careers and communities.

# LEARN MORE

Visit [www.ecmceducation.org](http://www.ecmceducation.org).

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

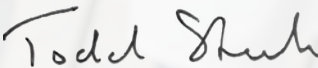
One word positively stands out as I reflect on 2020: resilience. Social strife, a global pandemic and political division defined much of the year but certainly not all of it. While COVID-19 particularly dashed plans, prompted isolation and created uncertainty across the world, many people also exhibited remarkable ingenuity, rose to overcome challenges, and, more than not, came together in solidarity—helping each other and those in need. In this spirit of unity, we thank all frontline, essential workers across America, including our own. At ECMC Education, faculty, students, leaders and partners relentlessly and creatively worked to train the next generation of essential workers. We would not be where we are today without people who acted boldly and led outside of their typical norms, for whom we are enormously grateful. As a result, this report contains inspiring outcomes that remained intact and aligned with our mission throughout the year. I hope you will find these results as encouraging as I do.

Many investments made in past years, such as those in online learning and faculty coaching, became instrumental in helping overcome the pains of the pandemic. For students at our Altierus Career College schools, these investments enabled us to quickly adopt a fully virtual educational delivery model and maintain learning continuity in a high-quality, compliant manner. Thanks to financial aid relief through the CARES ACT this

year, we were also able to provide direct aid and elevated support to our students. For employer training partners served through Altierus Training Solutions, our online training platform enabled their personnel to develop advanced skills without requiring travel to traditional training centers. Both efforts shined as beacons of triumph over challenge.

As we evaluate the shifting educational landscape, we know more change is ahead, which we will confidently spearhead. A persistent, growing middle-skills gap across the country holds back our economy and our communities, regretfully so when there are people in need of family-sustaining careers. The increasing need for essential workers requires us to not only do our part but to lead a new way forward for CTE in partnership with educators, employers and policymakers. To this end, we will continue to invest in virtual learning technology, product development capabilities for employer solutions and thought leadership activities to foster industry collaboration.

The momentum we generated this past year, even in the face of adversity, bodes well for the future. Thank you to all who have been part of our continued journey. Here's to returning to safer times and to moving forward together in 2021!



Todd Steele, President, ECMC Education



## IMPACT REPORT

# DELIVERING ON OUR MISSION

Despite the global COVID-19 pandemic, Altierus Career College achieved strong student outcomes throughout the year, helping students reach their aspirations while supporting them along their journeys.

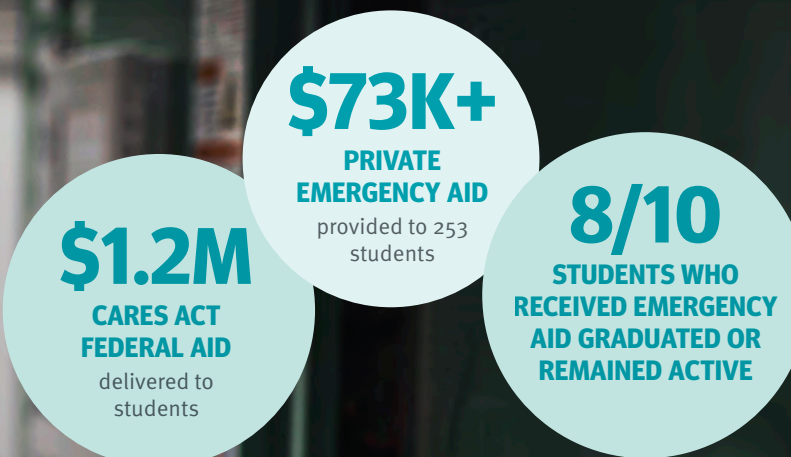
## How Students Graded Our Virtual Learning Transition<sup>1</sup>

Overall student satisfaction	93%
Student access to tools for success	87%
Instructor preparedness in virtual environment	91%
Weekly attendance rates	90%

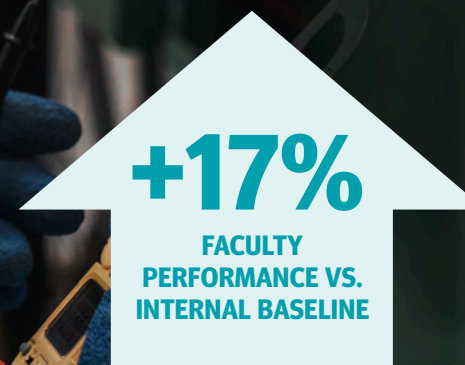
<sup>1</sup> All data is from March to June 2020.

<sup>2</sup> As reported to ACCSC in October 2020; 77% when adjusted for COVID-19 impact.

## Student Aid & Impact



## New Coaching Program Impact on Faculty Performance



## 2020 Key Performance Indicators

**17.5%**  
GROWTH IN NEW STUDENT ENROLLMENT



**1,213**  
LEARNER POPULATION



**73%**  
PLACEMENT RATE<sup>2</sup>  
in chosen career field



**70%**  
GRADUATION RATE  
(+2% year over year)



**ACCSC**  
Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges

Altierus Career College is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC).



THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

# ADAPTING TO CHANGE & LEARNING IN NEW WAYS

While the pandemic challenged campuses to do things in new ways, it did not impede learning. To keep progressing toward their goals, students, faculty and staff remained focused and flexible throughout the year, which culminated in our first-ever virtual graduation ceremonies.

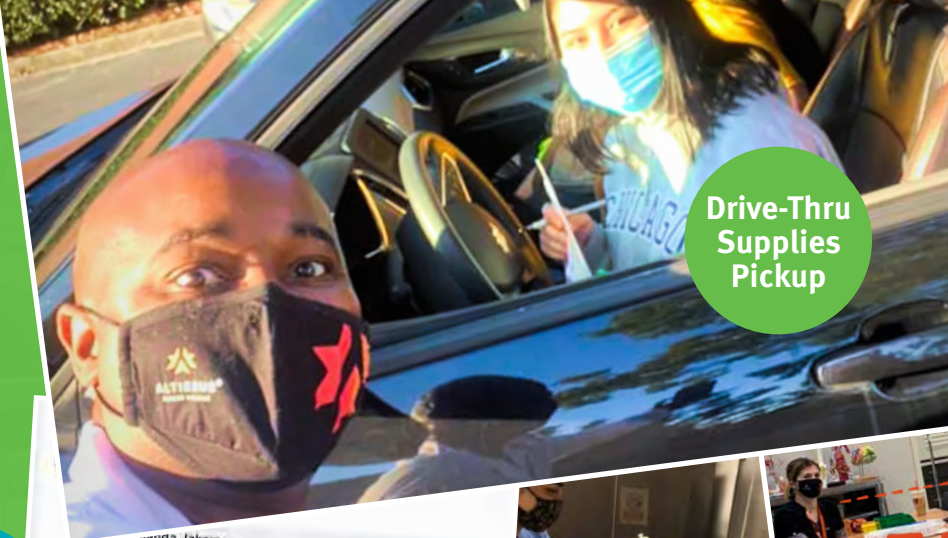
Virtual  
Community  
Building

Manda Jakamo  
Lien Nguyen I was about to type the same thing... Miss you girl!!  
Like Reply · 1w  
Lien Nguyen  
Manda Jakamo miss you too!!  
Like Reply · 1w  
Tim Dengler  
Love it!!  
Like Reply · 1w  
Kelly Alexander Washington  
I would so love to take these classes!!  
Like Reply · 1w  
Casa De Cabreras  
This class is the BOMB!!!!!!

Essential  
Externships



Drive-Thru  
Supplies  
Pickup



Virtual  
Instruction



Hands-On  
Labs While  
Socially  
Distant

“My experience with Altierus was the best, and I learned a lot from the school. When the pandemic hit, I was very satisfied [with] how they transitioned everything. And I was still able to complete my studies and go on to graduate!”

Kia Ellis, 2020 Graduate & Medical Assistant at Tanner Medical Center (Georgia)

Virtual  
Graduation

"I'm just a tiny Puerto Rican  
make her mama proud and being  
role model for my beautiful daughters  
Naydelin and Maryeliz."





## ALTIERUS TRAINING SOLUTIONS

# GENERATING NEW OUTCOMES FOR EMPLOYER PARTNERS

In early 2020, Altierus Training Solutions began a successful partnership with CoolSys, a national leader in commercial HVAC Refrigeration. Through a collaborative approach, we built a technology-driven training program to upskill their technicians. Our success together serves as a harbinger of greater opportunities in the employer training market at large.

With intense competition for scarce talent on the rise and a shortage of new talent entering key industries, it has become clear that employers need to differentiate themselves as desirable workplaces while growing proprietary recruiting pipelines. Altierus Training Solutions is intent on helping to solve these needs.

“CoolSys has always been dedicated to training and investing in employees, so we’re excited to be taking our training initiatives to a new level through our partnership with ECMC Education.”

Beth Goldstein,  
Chief Human Resources Officer at CoolSys

CoolSys

## Strategic Focus Areas



### PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Build a robust product lifecycle development capability for bringing differentiated training solutions to market, targeted to specific employer needs.



### CLIENT OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

Engineer a holistic service delivery and support model that sets Altierus Training Solutions apart from other providers.



### INNOVATION

Be a leader of technology-enabled training solutions through thoughtful experimentation and bold investments in next-generation models, platforms and tools.



### GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Staff an experienced business development team to identify and cultivate high-potential market opportunities; rapidly build brand awareness and credibility for extending solutions to employers and communities requiring CTE professionals to fuel their growth.



## OUTREACH

# HELPING OUR COMMUNITIES

As a nonprofit, we believe it's vitally important to give back to the communities in which we live and work—financially, in service and by standing in solidarity. In 2020, we continued this tradition by nominating local organizations for financial grants, volunteering and sponsoring vital, community educational initiatives.



### TARGETED GRANTMAKING

Through nominations by employees, ECMC Education's philanthropic affiliate ECMC Foundation funded \$990,000 in grants to support 99 mission-aligned nonprofits in our local markets.



### VOLUNTEERISM

Throughout the year, employees across our headquarters and campus locations participated in a variety of virtual and socially distanced volunteer opportunities, continuing to demonstrate concern, support and pride in our communities.



### EDUCATIONAL SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship and on-site installments provided to Junior Achievement, near our three campuses as well as at our Minneapolis, Minnesota, headquarters location, helped pave the way for the next generation of postsecondary learners.



VALUES IN ACTION

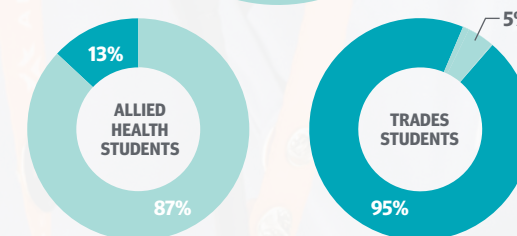
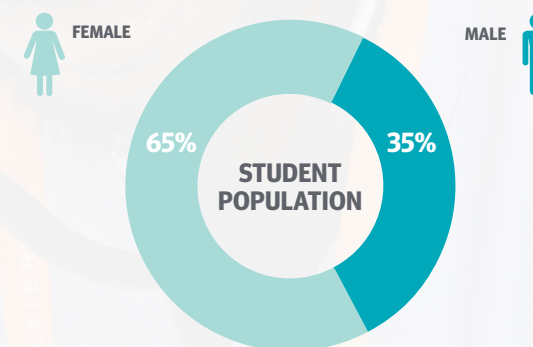
# PROMOTING DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Diversity, equity and inclusion values have become more vital than ever, given the systemic disadvantages that underserved populations in our country face—especially those witnessed in 2020. At ECMC Education, we proudly serve and support learners who often represent such underserved groups, seeking to forge a more equitable way forward.

**\$1.06M**  
TOTAL TOWARD  
TUITION PROVIDED  
THROUGH ALTIERUS  
GRANT

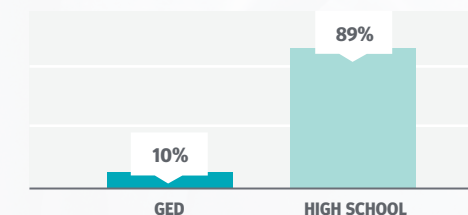


## GENDER

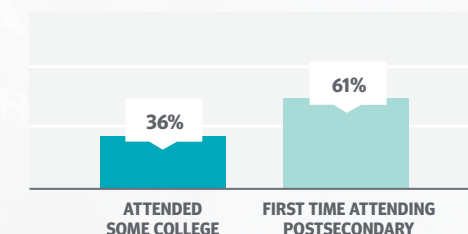


## PRIOR EDUCATION

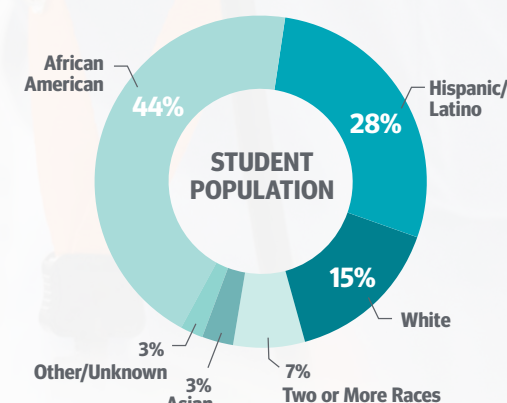
### PREVIOUS SECONDARY



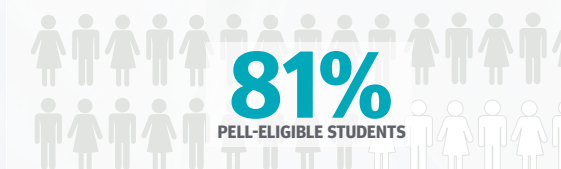
### PREVIOUS POSTSECONDARY



## RACE



## INCOME



## AGE





## INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP

# SHAPING IDEAS & INFLUENCING DISCOURSE

If 2020 marked a year of doing things differently, it also marked a year of deep reflection. *Do we go back to how we used to be or do we seize new openings of potential?* Leaders across ECMC Education not only internally grappled with such questions but published compelling theses, created public service campaigns and participated in wide-ranging events to carry the conversation forward in the industry.

### “QUESTION THE QUO” CAMPAIGN

ECMC Group, in partnership with ECMC Education and ECMC Foundation, launched a national public awareness campaign, Question The Quo, promoting CTE as a modern, mainstream path forward for all, especially next-generation postsecondary learners.

[www.questionthequo.org](http://www.questionthequo.org)

QUESTION  
THE QUO

### FORBES ARTICLE

ECMC Group’s CEO Jeremy Wheaton penned an industry article for Forbes, “Let’s Make the 2020s the Decade of Career and Technical Education.”

Forbes

### GEN Z SURVEY WITH VICE MEDIA

As an extension of Question The Quo, ECMC Education struck a partnership with Vice Media to field a comprehensive survey of Gen Z awareness, attitudes and aspirations toward different postsecondary educational paths. Todd Steele, president of ECMC Education, published the eye-opening findings.

VICE media group

### ASU+GSV CONFERENCE PANEL DISCUSSION

Participating in one of the most renowned educational events in the U.S., ECMC Education shared powerful learnings from its virtual reality work in CTE. Co-presenters included partners, Talespin VR and Inscribe Education.

ASU +GSV SUMMIT

### INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

ECMC Foundation and ECMC Education continued collaborating with the Association of Career and Technical Education, providing grants for leadership programming, sponsoring events and participating in fellowship programs aimed at fostering industry growth and development.

ACTE

### COVID-19 CTE CASE STUDY

ECMC Education codified firsthand experiences and learnings during COVID-19 into a shareable case study, showcasing actions, insights and results for other institutions and partners to leverage.

ECMC  
Education



## KEY INVESTMENTS

# BUILDING ON PAST INVESTMENTS

In 2017, ECMC Education established an Innovation School strategy to serve as a blueprint for transforming CTE with technology illuminating the way. In 2020, these investments also represented a north star for navigating narrow passages in uncharted, pandemic waters.

## KEY INVESTMENTS: 2018-2020

Prior grants and investments had a greater impact in 2020 than we ever imagined. By the time COVID-19 began shuttering the economy, we had already digitized campuses to an extent that made shifting to a 100% virtual learning format possible—until returning to a safe, hybrid model.



### DIGITIZED CURRICULUM

By proactively digitizing curriculum and programs to be partially online in 2018, faculty and students were able to quickly adopt a fully online modality during the pandemic.



### IPADS STANDARD WITH TUITION

In 2019, we included individual iPads® for all students as part of standard tuition, modernizing their learning, increasing educational access and enabling a fully virtual learning format.

## Past Investments at Work



### INSTRUCTOR COACHING PROGRAM

In late 2019, also fortuitously before the pandemic, we launched an instructor coaching program with dedicated personnel, which ultimately helped foster a smooth transition to virtual learning and a meaningful, overall student experience.



### STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Augmented student support services were also funded as an important safety net. These included financial, emotional, basic needs and academic resources to help students stay on track.



## KEY INVESTMENTS CONTINUED

# FUNDING INNOVATION FORWARD

Thanks to the CARES Act, we were able to continue providing education to students, with minimal disruption, through a virtual learning model during the pandemic. As we look ahead, support from ECMC Foundation will make it possible for us to continue innovating and extending educational access for students and employers.



“Possibilities abound for creating engaging, interactive learning experiences that deliver elevated results.”

Dr. Jennifer Erpelding,  
VP Academic Affairs, ECMC Education

## NEW INVESTMENTS TO INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS & EFFICACY

Building on past initiatives, new grants from ECMC Foundation will fund critical capabilities aimed at furthering outcomes for learners, employers and communities. For example, additional investments in new virtual learning formats aim to expand educational opportunities beyond levels during the pandemic.

From increased lab simulations to augmented reality practicums, possibilities abound for creating engaging, interactive learning experiences that deliver elevated results. Such capabilities have the potential to extend beyond our campuses, redefining distance learning at large.

We also will efficiently leverage these investments to create training solutions for employers nationwide.





## LOOKING AHEAD

# PUSHING THE CTE FRONTIER

2020 taught us many things; among them, that we can push the CTE model farther than previously thought, all while continuing to improve student outcomes. After intensive periods of change or strain, like those felt during the pandemic, the tendency of human nature is to retreat to pre-established comfort zones. While ECMC Education wisely carries forward best practices, we know there is more promise in driving innovation toward new ends. And we are backing this belief with a multi-year investment plan.



## 2021 & BEYOND

In late 2020, ECMC Education recommitted itself to leading in CTE through a reimagined five-year strategy.

### NEW CURRICULUM & DELIVERY MODALITIES

Extension of educational programming to reach more learners and broaden impact across the country.

### DISRUPTIVE TECH

Expansion of current operations through innovation and technology.

## Investment Focus Areas

### THIRD-PARTY SEED CAPITAL

Investment in promising third-party technology and businesses.

### OPPORTUNISTIC M&A

Growth through partnerships or acquisition of new businesses.

## COLLECT REQUIRED TOOLS & EQUIPMENT

Manifold Gauge



4X Service Hoses



Recovery Machine



Refrigerant Scale



5X Refrigerant Recovery Tanks

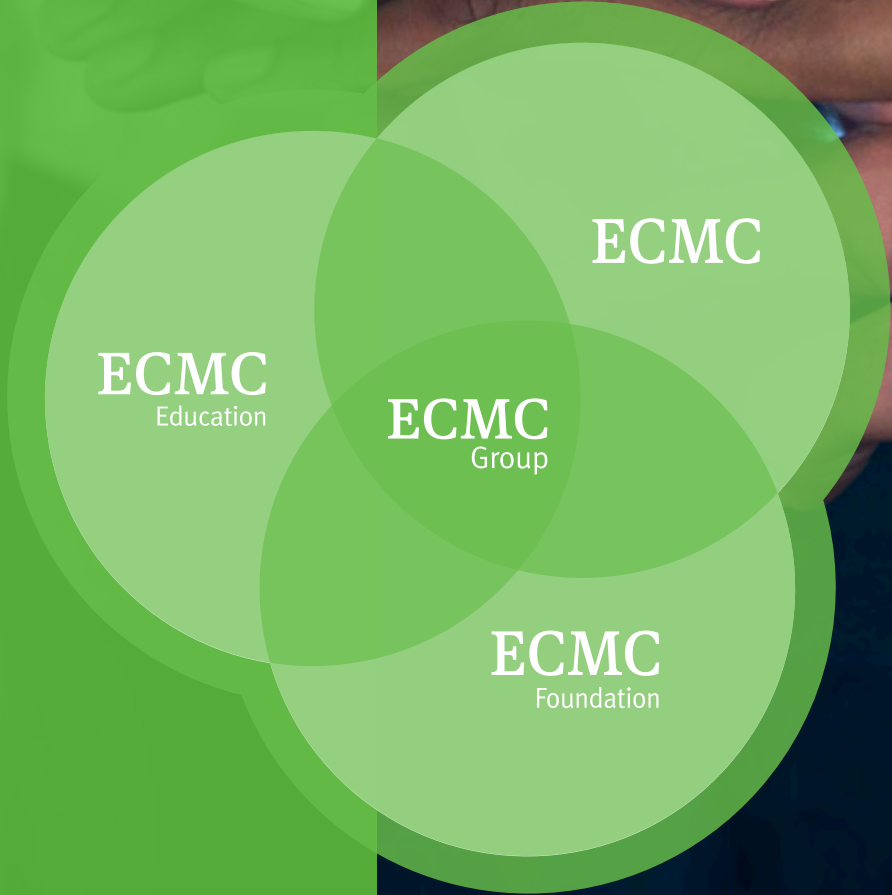




ABOUT ECMC GROUP COMPANIES

# OUTCOMES POWERED BY OUR FAMILY OF COMPANIES

ECMC Education’s parent organization ECMC Group and its affiliates empower underserved communities to thrive through education by means of a unique combination of educational solutions, investments and philanthropy.



**COLLABORATION  
WITH ECMC**

Our affiliate ECMC provides financial counseling and education services to empower learners to make better choices about their futures. For example, ECMC Education works with Solutions, a service of ECMC, to ensure that learners who have student loans receive monthly outreach during their grace period and beyond.

  
**4.0M+**

Students and families to whom ECMC has provided resources to help plan and pay for higher education  
(since 1994)

**SUPPORT FROM  
ECMC FOUNDATION**

Our philanthropic affiliate ECMC Foundation focuses on improving higher education and career success among underserved populations through evidence-based innovation. See the “Funding Innovation Forward” section (pages 17-18) to learn more about the types of investments funded by ECMC Foundation.

  
**\$192.6M**

In grants and investments dispersed by ECMC Foundation on a national basis  
(May 2014-December 2020)





[www.ecmceducation.org](http://www.ecmceducation.org)

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