

How would you go to Zoom University as a homeless youth? We asked Bridging Tech, a charity devoted to overcoming the digital divide

Bridging COVID-19 Isolation and the Digital Divide with Bridging Tech

In 2021, it is nearly impossible to get anything done without a laptop: apply for a job, go to school, safely connect with friends, or schedule a COVID-19 vaccine appointment. Yet, there are fewer laptops in existence than humans on this planet, presenting a unique challenge for unhoused students. Not only are they disadvantaged in terms of their living situation, but also have to deal with this extra technological hurdle known as the digital divide.

Naturalized Americans have a unique set of familial and institutional knowledge about how to navigate the complex and confusing American system: What is an SAT? Who can I ask for help on my math homework? Where can I get free public Wi-Fi? While these questions might seem obvious to a second-generation resident, they are anything but for immigrant and first-generation communities. This week's episode of *Back in America*, hosted by Podcast Editor Josh Wagner, highlights [Bridging Tech](#), a charity devoted to providing hardware and other educational resources for unhoused students. Having donated nearly 1,000 laptops nationwide, Bridging Tech is developing infrastructure for companies and individuals to donate disused computers to be wiped/refurbished before being donated to unhoused communities. Founded by rising Stanford seniors, Isabel Wang and Margot Bellon, Bridging Tech is committed to listening to the unhoused community and creating actually helpful resources, rather than assuming what would be best and offering potentially unhelpful solutions. Holly Giang, Bridging Tech's Foundation Relations Manager, also joins us for the interview.

To find out how unhoused youths can go to online school, what policy measures are holding back their success, and how to get involved with [Bridging Tech](#), listen to our episode!

In the coming weeks, the *Back in America* team will be launching an eight-part series investigating the relationship between music and poetry, tentatively titled "Rhythmic Verses." Join Podcast Editor Josh Wagner as he poetically travels around the country, asking the age-old question: What is American *to you*?