



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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COSI to Launch Back-to-School Statewide Roadshow to Help Bridge the Digital Divide

In partnership with the Ohio Mayors Alliance and the Mayors' Partnership for Progress COSI will make STEM education accessible to communities across Ohio

Columbus, OH –The Center of Science and Industry (COSI), the top-ranked science center in the country by USA Today, the Ohio Mayor's Alliance, and Mayors' Partnership for Progress have joined forces to help make science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) educational programming more accessible to Ohio communities. As distance learning needs increase across the state, COSI is embarking on a statewide roadshow to bring its exciting new programs like [COSI Connects](#) and [COSI on Wheels: Curbside Edition](#) with hands-on STEM kits including its new [COSI Learning Lunchbox](#). These resources will be primarily available to underserved youth throughout the various partner communities as a method to assist in breaking down barriers to education during these times. As part of the tour, COSI will partner with local mayors in cities like **Athens, Massillon, Canton, Cambridge, Steubenville, Chillicothe, Dayton, Lima, Parma and others** to identify an appropriate location to provide free Wi-Fi and STEM kits for youth.

The digital divide has been fully substantiated by this pandemic, and COSI stands ready to serve. COSI will be delivering a free COSI on Wheels: Curbside program, which features a COSI Connects truck with a Wi-Fi signal capable of converting the location into a mobile community Wi-Fi hotspot. Participants will be encouraged to download free COSI Connects STEM activities on their mobile device for later use at home - even without the internet.

"Bridging the digital divide and delivering opportunities for science education is critical now more than ever as students head back to school through online portals or blended programs of digital and on-site experiences during this pandemic," said **Dr. Frederic Bertley, President and CEO of COSI**. "Through COSI Connects – our free digital portal to a universe of science - COSI has served the region, state and nation with online science learning. We now stand ready to serve in a safe, in-person capacity through this statewide tour. This is just the beginning as we work together with Ohio communities to help deliver free and fun educational resources to those who need it most."

"Education is critically important to our local communities and mayors across our state. We are excited to partner with COSI to help facilitate distance learning and provide much needed digital literacy throughout our state," said **Keary McCarthy, Executive Director of the Ohio Mayor's Alliance**.

"Southeast Ohio is working diligently to support its students and families during this unprecedented time and we look forward to partnering with COSI to bring hands-on fun distance learning and digital resources to our youth and families in rural Appalachian Ohio," said **Amista Lipot, Executive Director of the Mayors' Partnership for Progress**.

The eight week program will kick off in Athens in September. The program will tour other cities across Ohio and run through October. Dates and specific locations in each local community will be announced soon.

COSI has been closed since March 13, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the closure, COSI has been engaging the community through COSI Connects, COSI's digital doorway to online learning, the COSI Learning Lunchbox, kits filled with hands-on science activities, and the new "COSI on Wheels: Curbside Edition." For more information on COSI Connects visit cosi.org/connects.