WE ARE
Redefining the
Social Safety Net
When we started Edquity in 2016, it was with a single mission in mind: to ensure that poverty would no longer be a barrier to higher education graduation. A mission simply stated, but in reality no easy feat. The stark reality was that nearly 9 million college students were struggling with their food and housing security, and 3 million were dropping out due to their inability to meet the costs related to their basic needs. Moreover, these experiences were disproportionately concentrated among Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students.

To address the tremendous inequity and injustice at the intersection of poverty and postsecondary education, we developed evidence-based technology that supports equitable and fast distribution of emergency aid funds. We saw the potential to transform the lives of students through faster, equitable access to emergency cash assistance.

In 2021, we reached the significant milestones of distributing nearly $100 million in emergency aid funding to more than 100,000 students since we launched in 2016. We reduced the time from application to payment from weeks when we first started to 25 hours. And we’ve set a new standard for emergency aid in higher education.

But the issues that students face are unfortunately a microcosm of broader structural poverty in the U.S., and to further our overarching anti-poverty mission, we have now expanded our focus to support cities and states in the administration of municipal cash transfer programs, including emergency rental assistance (ERAP).

And our work is just beginning.

Edquity sees a world that has not only normalized cash transfers as a common component of our safety net but also has implemented a radically transformed infrastructure to ensure these cash transfers are deployed to narrow equity gaps and maximize social determinants of health. And in that world, we are ready to lead the way.

I’m excited to share how we’ve set critical groundwork to do so in 2021 and how we’ll be rapidly scaling our impact in 2022.

David Helene
Founder and CEO of Edquity
Transformational Impact
THROUGH TIMELY CASH GRANTS

edquity
The Edquity team is driven by the desire to create a world where emergency cash assistance is fundamental and infrastructure allows distribution in an equitable and timely manner. Our work in 2021 was in service of that goal — expanding our internal capacity to swiftly distribute federal and charitable emergency aid to students who need it most.

Edquity made awarding assistance easier given the volume of funds available and number of potential applicants.

DAVID RICHARDS
DIRECTOR OF STUDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES AT FRESNO PACIFIC UNIVERSITY
Mission-Aligned Partnerships
WITH A BROADENED REACH

edquity
In 2021, Edquity doubled our partnership footprint by supporting more than 40 partners across 10 states. But more than that, we’ve strengthened our commitment to supporting vulnerable, underserved student populations by partnering with more minority-serving institutions.

75% of current partners are Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) or Emerging HSIs, reflecting our commitment to supporting institutions who serve Latinx students, as well as first-generation learners.

Our Partnerships

Our portfolio of partners has grown to include colleges and universities, nonprofit organizations, foundations, and local governments. We currently partner with and support:

38 Postsecondary Institutions
5 Community-Based Organizations
1 K-12 Public School District

Amarillo College  Hampton College  Dallas College  DCPS PERSISTS  Community College of Los Angeles
Pierce College  Mesa College  San Diego Miramar College  ServeMN
Southern New Hampshire University  United Way of King County  University of Hawai’i System  Water4All Baltimore
DATA & INSIGHTS
Contextualizing Student Basic Needs
Our work at Edquity allows us to see firsthand the complexities of student basic needs insecurity. Research and insights from more than 145,000 student applications emphasize that complexity. We fundamentally believe that policy and infrastructure need to shift in order to build wraparound support services that better serve vulnerable populations.

3
Average number of basic needs insecurities cited by students

46%
Percentage of students in highest level of need

63%
Applications submitted on nights and weekends

78%
Applicants experiencing multiple areas of need

49%
Percentage of applicants who are student parents

88%
Students who say funds made them more likely to graduate

Top Challenge Categories

HOUSING 56.3%
TRANSPORTATION 51.1%
FOOD 46.0%
LEARNING 45.6%

The funds allowed me to focus on my bachelors degree and remain in school for another semester due to helping with rent and living expenses.

HEATHER W., STUDENT FUNDING RECIPIENT
INVESTING IN A

Diverse Team &
Anti-Racist Culture
Our core values at Edquity are not merely words on a page. They are conscious actions that drive our work every day. In 2021, we lived our core values with initiatives to ensure anti-racist practices, unbiased hiring and cross-functional collaboration. Today, more than 50% of employees are people of color. We welcomed 20 new employees to Edquity, and our staff members are located in 14 states throughout the country.

The culture at Edquity one of the main reasons why I love working here. The whole team truly lives and breathes our values. We are all working towards the same goal of ensuring that students have the resources they need to stay in school and graduate. There is a lot of collaboration among teams, and everyone has the ability to contribute their ideas on how to improve the product.

MELANIE BUTRON, PARTNER SUCCESS MANAGER

**Living our Core Values**

- **Implemented** BIAS-FREE, ANTI-RACIST HIRING PRACTICES with each role. Job descriptions include no mention of education credentials as requirements.
- **Continued** MONTHLY ALL-TEAM ANTI-RACISM DISCUSSIONS, learning, and focus.
- **EDQUITY WAS CLOSED** ON JUNETEENTH and it was a dedicated day of service, self-learning, and reflection.
- **Team members offered** colleagues 74 DISTINCT VALUES SHOUT-OUTS, incorporated into every staff meeting.

"The culture at Edquity one of the main reasons why I love working here. The whole team truly lives and breathes our values. We are all working towards the same goal of ensuring that students have the resources they need to stay in school and graduate. There is a lot of collaboration among teams, and everyone has the ability to contribute their ideas on how to improve the product."
An Ambitious Vision for 2022

A N D B E Y O N D
Eradicating poverty and basic needs insecurity takes commitment and ingenuity. At Edquity, we are ready to do the work in 2022 and beyond. We firmly believe that cash assistance programs build resiliency and promote social mobility. We are guided by our principles of centering anti-racism and speed in decisioning and payment.

As we move into the new year, we hope to support more individuals than ever before: Students. Parents. Renters. Everyone.

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**Areas of Focus for 2022**

**Focus #1**  
**SUPPORTING HIGHER EDUCATION MORE HOLISTICALLY**  
with wraparound services in addition to cash assistance.

**Focus #2**  
**HELPING GOVERNMENTS IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE**  
for administering equitable and effective cash transfer programs.

**Focus #3**  
**REAFFIRMING THE EFFICACY OF OUR WORK**  
in higher education as well as state and local governments.

**Focus #4**  
**CONTINUING OUR COMMITMENT TO ANTI-RACISM**  
— from our product design and innovation to hiring and internal culture shifts.