CORRECTION INDIANA BROADBAND NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

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Indiana Broadband
CONNECT INDIANA

FROM THE DESK OF

Roberto Gallardo
Director of the Purdue Center for Regional Development (PCRD) and a Purdue Extension Community & Regional Economics Specialist

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Greetings! It is an honor for me to serve as acting Director of the Next Level Connections broadband programs. I have been involved in broadband related research, engagement and advancement over the past ten years, and have seen firsthand the intersection with community and economic development.

I am very excited to see the interest from providers and community stakeholders alike on our three programs: Next Level Connections round three, Indiana Connectivity Program, and the subsidy program. I look forward to seeing how these programs move the needle to reduce the digital divide within the State of Indiana.

Please let me know how the NLC and/or OCRA team can help your communities benefit from these programs.

Thank you,

Roberto Gallardo, PhD
Acting Director, Next Level Broadband Connections
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TRAVELS OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR SUZANNE CROUCH

Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch has had an exciting past few weeks. Her travels have brought her new opportunities to meet and observe Hoosiers throughout the State of Indiana.

In Crawford County, the Lt.Governor spent time at Red Hill Fiber Mill & Alpaca Farm, saying, "I ended the week in Crawford County, learning about one of our great @indiana_grown members. Ty and Lindsey Higgins own the Red Hill Fiber Mill & Alpaca Farm. They led a tour of their farm and talked about their operations and their aspirations for the fiber industry."

Crossroads Christian Church hosted the Freedom Isn't Free brunch which the Lt. Governor attended, writing, "I attended the 'Freedom Isn't Free' brunch to honor and celebrate the men and women who served and died for our freedoms. Thank you, @rivercityrodeo for help sponsoring the event and for the photo."

At the 10th annual Indiana Conference for Women, the Lt.Governor had the honor of helping to kick off the event, commenting, "I am so grateful to have a role in a program that helps women build careers, develop professionally, and experience lives that are rewarding, healthy and fulfilling."

Follow along with Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch as she continues her statewide travels.

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram

FEDERAL UPDATE

Federal Infrastructure Bill

Recently, Congress voted to pass a large Infrastructure spending bill with specific line items for broadband.

Follow our Indiana Broadband Office social media accounts as we begin to highlight programs and funding provided by the $65 billion in funding that is dedicated to broadband.

CONNECT INDIANA

Applications are now open for the Indiana Connectivity Program. This new tool can connect residents and businesses that lack internet service with internet service providers and assist in the expense of extending broadband to unserved and underserved locations. The deadline for applications is fast approaching, with this round ending on Nov. 28.

"The Indiana Connectivity Program aims to bring high quality broadband service to unserved and underserved Hoosiers," Crouch said. "The last year and a half has shined a light on the severe importance of having everyone connected. This program is a path to bring service to households and businesses that are in internet darkness or have speeds that are not meeting the demands on our students who are eLearning or our workforce teleworking."

Hoosiers and business owners lacking internet connectivity can communicate their interest by entering their address and information into the Next Level Connections portal here. Hoosiers can also initiate interest by calling the Indiana Broadband Connect Center, which is now open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Hoosiers can reach the call center at 833-639-8522.

To be eligible, a location must have access to actual speeds of less than 25 Mbps (download) and 3 Mbps (upload). Inputting location information into the **Next Level Connections Broadband portal does not guarantee extension of service.**

Communities, please continue to encourage your residents to log on and apply for this program. A media kit has been created for you to utilize within your community and on social media. To access this kit, click here.

To learn more about this opportunity, click here.

NEXT LEVEL CONNECTIONS ROUND THREE

Round Three Updates

Round three of the Next Level Connections Grant Program continues to be a success. Indiana will invest $270 million toward improving broadband access and adoption in Indiana. The Next Level Connections Broadband Grant Program is designed to provide funds for the deployment of broadband infrastructure to provide eligible broadband service to unserved end users, which include households, businesses and community anchor institutions, such as schools and health clinics, across Indiana.

Letters of intent challenges for round three of Next Level Connections were due on Nov. 8. Decisions are expected to be made around Nov. 24. Full applications for round three of funding will be due Jan. 6, 2022.

Round Three of the program has received more than 250 letters of intent requesting a total of more than $606 million in state grant funding with an additional $280 million in matching funds. Decisions about how much can be awarded and to which projects are expected in the spring of 2022.

To learn more about the Next Level Connections Grant Program, click here.

Round Two Project Groundbreaking in Crawford County

Construction has begun on a fiber optic internet project by Nashville-based Mainstream Fiber Networks that will include 80 miles of cable in Crawford County. The Crawford County Economic Development Partnership and Mainstream partnered in 2020 on a readiness plan, which led to a Next Level Connections grant of $3 million to help fund the project.

Mainstream says construction is underway from Milltown through Marengo, Leavenworth, English and Eckerty. The completed project will connect more than 1,000 households and 150 businesses, schools and other institutions.

To read more, click here.

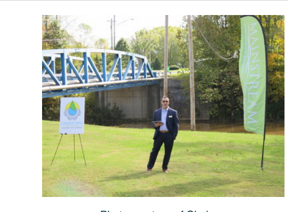
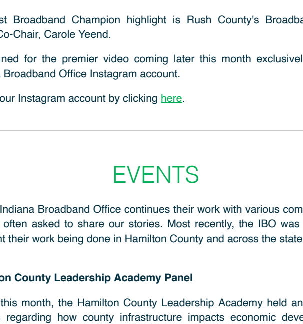


Photo courtesy of Clarion.

BROADBAND CHAMPIONS: SNEAK PEEK!



The Indiana Broadband Office is excited to announce our Broadband Champions Program. This program shines a spotlight on the Broadband Ready Communities throughout Indiana and the leaders who helped to make it happen.

Our first Broadband Champion highlight is Rush County's Broadband Task Force Co-Chair, Carole Yeend.

Stay tuned for the premier video coming later this month exclusively on our Indiana Broadband Office Instagram account.

Follow our Instagram account by clicking here.

EVENTS

As the Indiana Broadband Office continues their work with various communities, we are often asked to share our stories. Most recently, the IBO was asked to highlight their work being done in Hamilton County and across the state.

Hamilton County Leadership Academy Panel

Earlier this month, the Hamilton County Leadership Academy held an event in Fishers regarding how county infrastructure impacts economic development. The day was filled with speakers educating audience members about the efforts being made to attract and retain top-tier workforce talent in the community. Attendees were able to hear from local business owners about why they chose Hamilton County as the destination for their company. Additionally, Fishers Mayor, Scott Fadness, spoke about the city's future plans and initiatives.

To learn more about the Hamilton County Leadership Academy, click here.

Wells County Taskforce Meeting

Chad Kline, Wells County Economic Development Executive Director, organized the first meeting of the Wells County Taskforce. Earnie Holtrey, Project Manager for the Indiana Broadband Office, presented the Steps to Success and shared lessons learned from his time assisting group formations and cities through their Broadband Ready Communities process.

Showcase Rochester Day!

Denny Spinner, OCRA Executive Director, and Earnie Holtrey, Indiana Broadband Office Project Manager, recently attended, "Showcase Rochester Day," hosted by the city of Rochester, Indiana. The two were able to spend time with Rochester Mayor, Ted Denton, to speak about the RTC Communications Rochester and Fulton County expansion plans and projects.

To learn more about future plans and projects for Rochester, click here.

We want to hear from you! Please send broadband-related news regarding your community or organization to the Indiana Broadband Office at INbroadband@lg.in.gov, and we'll share on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or in this newsletter!

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