Media Contact:

Jessica Ditto
jditto@connectednation.org
(202) 251-4749

Erin Kleinlein
ekleinlein@connectsc.org
(803) 318-5639

For Immediate Release
October 18, 2013

Bamberg County Joins Connect South Carolina's Broadband Initiative

Kickoff Meeting Focused on Access, Adoption, and Use of High-Speed Internet in Bamberg County

Bamberg, SC – Bamberg county leaders have enrolled their community in the innovative Connected program that seeks to boost the local economy and quality of life for residents through increased access, adoption, and use of high-speed Internet.

Connect South Carolina Program Lead Heather Jones met with 38 representatives from the Bamberg County community, including County Administrator Joey Preston, to initiate the kickoff of the Connected program on October 15 at the Bamberg County Library in Bamberg. Community leaders gathered to discuss various ideas and challenges of increasing high-speed Internet access, adoption, and use in the area.

The Connected Community Engagement Program involves building a comprehensive action plan for developing a technology-ready community by reviewing the technology landscape, developing regional partnerships, establishing local teams, and conducting a thorough community assessment. The gathered information from the meeting on October 15 will be used to help create the official Technology Action Plan for the Bamberg community.

Jones presented the current Bamberg County data at the kickoff meeting, including information related to the various degrees of broadband adoption in the county.

Attendees identified that the rural community in the county had several pockets of unserved areas and that this should be a main focus moving forward with the initiative.

"Technology opens the door to the future," said Preston. "From healthcare to education, agriculture to business – everything we do now, we can do better, faster, and more efficiently. Making broadband technology a reality for the citizens of this community places a world of opportunities at their fingertips."

The Connected program is part of the Connect South Carolina initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce NTIA State Broadband Initiative program.

# # #

Connected Nation developed the *Connected* Community Engagement Program to help guide a community through an assessment of its overall broadband and technology status.

Connected Certified Communities have measurably demonstrated their proficiency for effective Access, Adoption, and Use of broadband supported technologies. Connected Nation through its partners provides a national platform for recognizing those communities that excel across these important benchmarks. Funded by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), this effort is part of the State Broadband Initiative. http://www.connectednation.org/get-connected

# # #

About Connect South Carolina: As the State Broadband Initiative, Connect South Carolina is leading the effort to increase high-speed Internet access, adoption and use to ensure South Carolina's competitiveness in the connected global economy of the twenty-first century. Connect South Carolina is a public-private partnership designated by the state to work with all broadband providers to create South Carolina's first interactive map of broadband coverage. This work serves as a foundation for addressing remaining service gaps while also engaging state, regional and local leaders in workforce development activities designed to bridge South Carolina's digital divide. For maps, research or to get involved with efforts in your community please visit: www.ConnectSC.org.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter.