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Connect South Carolina Names Saluda County Broadband Hero Award Winner

Award Presented at 'IT-oLogy Connections 2013 in partnership with Connect South Carolina' Conference

SALUDA, SC – [Connect South Carolina](#) recognized Saluda County with a Broadband Hero Award during the "IT-oLogy Connections 2013 in partnership with Connect South Carolina" event in Columbia Thursday for being the first county to complete the Connected program assessment in South Carolina.

Saluda County was selected based on the efforts of many to complete the assessment process and begin implementation of the Connected Technology Action Plan.

The Connected Community Engagement Program guides communities through an assessment of their overall broadband and technology innovation, using criteria set as a part of a "community certification" model. The program helps train regional team leaders and supports the formation of community planning teams made up of various sector representatives.

Saluda County Council Chairman Don Hancock was named the community champion of the county for his direct assistance with enrollment in the program. Edward Parler, economic development director, DJ Miller, Saluda County IT director, Joye Taylor, IT director for Saluda County Schools, and Councilwoman Gwen Shealy also played very important roles in the enrollment and assessment process for the county.

Governor Nikki Haley wrote a letter congratulating Saluda County for being a true Broadband Hero. Acting FCC Chairwoman Mignon Clyburn also appeared by video reiterating the importance of the adoption of broadband in South Carolina.

Saluda County's top goal from the new plan is to expand broadband availability to unserved areas using fixed wireless technology. The new plan gives the community step-by-step action items to make sure that goal is met.

In attendance at the summit were more than 150 education professionals, broadband providers, technology companies, community representatives, and additional attendees throughout the state via webcast.

Connect South Carolina thanks Hancock and other supporting community members for championing broadband expansion in their community.

Photo: From left, members of the Saluda County Community Technology Team with Connect South Carolina State Program Lead and Community Technology Advisor Heather Jones at Thursday's "IT-oLogy Connections 2013 in partnership with Connect South Carolina" event in Columbia.

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About Connect South Carolina: As the State Broadband Initiative grantee, 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.

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