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Greenwood County Enrolls in Connect South Carolina's Connected Community Certification Program

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

Greenwood, SC – Greenwood County leaders have enrolled their community in an innovative 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 Community Technology Advisor Heather Jones, along with 50 community leaders representing healthcare, industry, economic development, and county/city government, joined together on Tuesday, January 22 at the Piedmont Technical College, Self Conference Center to discuss ideas and challenges to bringing high-speed Internet to individuals and families in the area.

The Connected certification 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 attendees identified a number of issues that they wished to address: accessing high-speed internet in Ware Shoals where industry is struggling to prosper with dial-up service, and accessing Internet in rural areas of the county and outlying areas where service is spotty and slow.

“It is clear that when 50 community leaders, business owners, and public officials attend an initial meeting on broadband, they understand the important role that the Internet and technology play in the lives of the citizens of Greenwood County,” said Jones. “It’s exciting to know that these people care a great deal about where they live and are invested in this process and the time it takes to help introduce widespread use of the best technologies to the community.”

During the meeting, local providers were able to meet with an existing industry to address broadband issues in the Ware Shoals area, and in cooperation with Community Champion

Catalina Valencia, several community leaders volunteered to gather the necessary information for the Connected program. Greenwood County IT Director Brad Barnell also volunteered to assist with gathering population data for the certification process.

“By bringing high-speed Internet to our community, we put our region ahead of the curve. Technology puts our state on the road to success by fostering new jobs, new opportunities, and increased economic development,” said Mark Warner, CEO of Greenwood Partnership Alliance.

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

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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.

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CONNECTEDSM
Community Engagement 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>