



# Marlboro County Releases Comprehensive Technology Action Plan

**Media Contact:** Jessica Ditto  
[jditto@connectednation.org](mailto:jditto@connectednation.org)  
(202) 251-4749

**For Immediate Release**  
November 12, 2013

## ***Marlboro County proclaims commitment to economic development and quality of life with Connected community technology plan***

**Bennettsville, SC** – Marlboro County, South Carolina now has an action plan to make way for greater technology use across the community and pave the way for a brighter economic future. The [Technology Action Plan](#) was unveiled Thursday at Marian Wright Edelman Public Library in Bennettsville, as part of Marlboro County's participation in the [Connected](#) Community Engagement Program through the Connect South Carolina initiative. Thirty-two South Carolina communities are currently involved in some stage of the Connected program, but Marlboro is the state's fifth to unveil its official Technology Action Plan.

Participating in the Connected program means Marlboro County has gone through an extensive assessment of its overall broadband and technology innovation. The Technology Action Plan sets general community-wide broadband connectivity requirements to be worked toward that will support economic development and residential quality of life. The new plan gives the community step-by-step action items to make sure that goals are met and will aid in future broadband expansion and programs that will ensure the community maintains widespread Internet access, adoption, and use.

Community Technology Advisor Lindsay Conrad hosted the event and shared with attendees Marlboro County's technology inventory as well as scores indicating their success in the areas of access, adoption, and use. Also present were representatives from a local provider, Electronic Services Company of Hamlet, NC, who explained that construction of a new tower has begun and it will service a large portion of Marlboro County, particularly in areas where there has previously been no service.

“We are excited to be a part of this important initiative that will put our residents on the information superhighway. As our world becomes increasingly technology-driven, we don’t want to be left behind,” said Corina Esaw, director of Wallace Family Life Center and Connect Marlboro community champion. “The Connected community certification process will help us achieve a better business environment, more effective community and economic development, improved healthcare, enhanced education, and more efficient government.”

Action items identified from the plan reveal included applying to USDA for funding to support broadband build-out in the community, complete a vertical assets inventory, create local jobs via teleworking opportunities, fund and deploy a digital mobile literacy library, perform a broadband build-out analysis in unserved areas, and provide incentives to encourage computer purchases by students.

“The presentation of the Technology Action Plan today is great step toward bringing new possibilities to the Marlboro County community,” said Conrad. “We are looking forward to continuing to work closely with the Marlboro County community engagement team in beginning the next phase of this project to connect and directly impact businesses and individuals in the community.”

The Connected program is part of the Connect South Carolina initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce NTIA State Broadband Initiative program. Connect South Carolina is working to facilitate the access, adoption, and use of technology throughout the state to create a better business environment, more effective community and economic development, improved healthcare, more efficient government, enhanced education, and improved quality of life. Residents are encouraged to get involved by joining their local Connected technology team and using the free [Every Community Online](#) program offered by Connect South Carolina to get training in computer and Internet skills which makes them eligible for discounted computers and home Internet service.

***Photo: Corina Esaw, director of Wallace Family Life Center and Connect Marlboro community champion, addressing attendees at the Connected Technology Action Plan release Thursday at Marian Wright Edelman Public Library in Bennettsville.***

###

**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](http://www.ConnectSC.org).

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



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. [www.connectmycommunity.org](http://www.connectmycommunity.org)

