South Carolina Welcomes First Certified Connected Community

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Anderson County proclaims commitment to economic development and quality of life with Connected community certification

Anderson, SC – Anderson County is now officially a Connect South Carolina certified Connected community! Twenty-two communities are currently involved in some stage of the Connected program, but Anderson County is the state's first to achieve the official Connected certification.

The occasion was marked with a public event Tuesday at the Anderson County Public Library in Anderson. The Anderson County Technology Team was presented with an official Connected trophy and certificates.

"Being certified as an official Connected community and the first in our state is a big step in preparing our residents and businesses for future economic success," said Community Champion and Anderson County Grant Writer Steve Newton. "Not only is it a step in the right direction, but our participation in this program also serves as a model to other communities, illustrating the importance of recognizing just how vital connectivity is in our society. We will continue to work toward seeking opportunities for affordable broadband and digital services, in addition to widespread promotion of the benefits broadband adoption and use can offer to our community. Our team is encouraged by the community's support

at the unveiling of our technology plan and appreciates the recognition by Connected Nation and Connect South Carolina."

 Anderson is only the fifth community in the nation to earn the certification. Developed by Connected Nation, the Connected program entails 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 broadband coverage of the area was measured using Connect South Carolina's broadband availability maps and survey research.

The Anderson County Technology Action Plan unveiled at the event includes projects to expand digital literacy, build awareness for the benefits of broadband, and assist businesses with websites and social media, as well as improving the online presence of local governments, among other entities.

Connected certification affords a community an avenue to discuss its success and pursue opportunities as a recognized, technologically advanced community.

"Receiving a Connected certification speaks to the passion and pride of Anderson County's community leaders who understand how impactful broadband is to their community and how it will help residents and businesses compete in an ever-increasing technological society," said Connect South Carolina Community Technology Advisor Lindsay Conrad. "Anderson County has the distinction of being the first South Carolina community to earn this certification and since last August, I've been so encouraged seeing the teamwork and the focus to ensure Anderson County and the state of South Carolina are heading in the right direction in this digital age."

Anderson County's Connected certification comes after ten months of the local Technology Team working with Connect South Carolina to assess the broadband landscape, identify gaps, and establish actionable goals and objectives. The certification is an important benchmark as the team now phases into working its newly established long-term community broadband plan. Residents are also encouraged to get involved by joining their local Connected technology team and using the free Every Community Online program to get training in computer and Internet skills which makes them eligible for discounted computers and home Internet service. Residents and businesses are encouraged to visit

the [community technology profile](#) on the website and help project leaders populate a directory of technology assets in the county.

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. 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.

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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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