

eCommunity STRATEGIES

December 2009



Welcome to Connected Tennessee's eCommunity Strategies Newsletter

Happy holidays and welcome to the December edition of our eCommunity Strategies newsletter. We hope you had a wonderful Christmas and are looking ahead to 2010 with as much excitement and anticipation as we are. It's been an exciting month for Connected Tennessee, capping off a banner year for broadband expansion in Tennessee. In this month's newsletter, we'll bring you the highlights from 2009. The most significant development happened just last week, when the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced the awarding of \$1.8 million to the State of Tennessee and Connected Tennessee through The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The award will help Connected Tennessee deliver a comprehensive map of existing broadband service to the state, among other things. Find out all the details on page 2.

Also in this month's newsletter, we'll bring you a sneak peek of a new interactive mapping tool for viewing, analyzing and validating broadband

data that will soon be available via the Connected Tennessee website. Called BroadbandStat, this tool is expected to change the process of collecting broadband data across the state.

Finally, I was recently asked to share the digital inclusion work of Connected Tennessee at an FCC hearing in Memphis designed to help foster the development of a national broadband plan. Read all the details about the event on page 3.

If broadband technology is impacting your life and you would like to be featured in an upcoming newsletter, if you would like broadband and it is not available where you live or if you'd simply like to test your Internet connection speed, we want to hear from you! Visit our website and look for the gray buttons on the left side of the page.

We wish you a very happy new year and look forward to working together in 2010.

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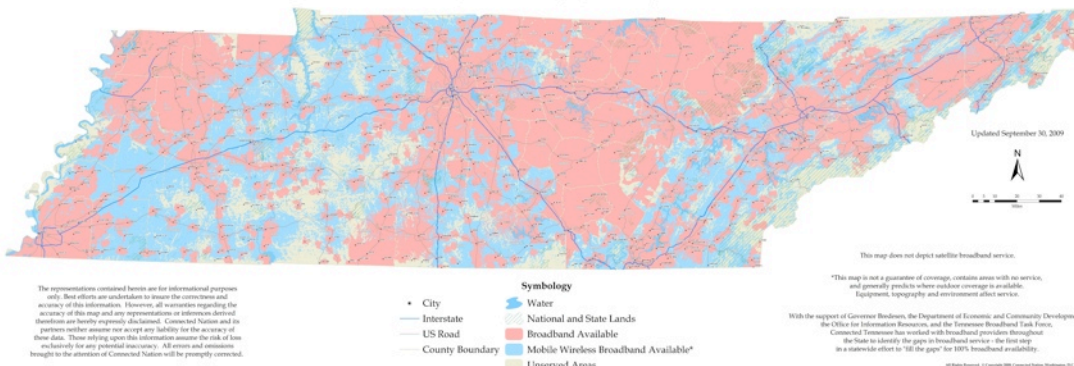
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Tennessee Awarded \$1.8 Million in Recovery Act Funding for Broadband Initiative



Broadband Service Inventory for the State of Tennessee



Connected Tennessee's Broadband Inventory Map

Nashville, TN - Tennessee will receive \$1.8 million in federal funding for broadband mapping and planning in an effort to increase the availability and use of high-speed Internet service in the state. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) matching grant is awarded by the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

The award will help Connected Tennessee deliver a comprehensive map of existing broadband service to the state.

"Expanding access to high-speed Internet services across our state is key to economic development in today's environment," Governor Phil

Bredesen said. "About half the state's geographic area is underserved for broadband, representing about 10 percent of Tennesseans. This Recovery Act funding will put Tennessee in a better position to compete in the new global economy."

In conjunction with broadband providers in the state, Connected Tennessee will periodically update service maps to reflect broadband availability and other relevant information such as household size, topographical information and civil infrastructure data.

Connected Tennessee is a public-private partnership launched by the state in 2007 to unite local governments, businesses and citizens in the

goal of increasing broadband service in the state's underserved areas. The state has contracted with Connected Nation, a national leader in broadband issues and technology, to help with mapping and planning.

"We are pleased to be working with the state to further develop our existing broadband maps and to paint a more accurate picture of broadband availability throughout the state," said Michael Ramage, Connected Tennessee's executive director. "We are honored to be recognized for the work we have accomplished over the past two years and to be afforded the

opportunity build on that foundation to further close the digital divide in the State of Tennessee."

Tennessee businesses, organizations, Internet service providers and citizens can contribute to the mapping process by visiting www.connectedtn.org to provide information about broadband access in their areas.

Mapping is one of four parts of the state's application for broadband grants. The state also applied for \$20.9 million for broadband infrastructure; \$5.67 million for sustainability and adoption; and \$4.92 million for public computer centers. Federal announcements related to those three areas are not expected until early 2010.

Tennessee Receives Verizon Foundation Grant for Online Resources

Tennessee Department of Education has been awarded a \$30,000 grant from the Verizon Foundation to provide training to teachers statewide on the thousands of free, standards-based education resources available through Verizon Thinkfinity (www.thinkfinity.org). This is the second year the foundation has provided this grant to the department.

Verizon Thinkfinity contains thousands of free educational resources, including K-12 lesson plans, in-class activities and videos that can be found quickly and searched by grade level, keyword or subject.

"Partnerships are vital during this time of transition in Tennessee," Education Commissioner Timothy Webb said. "The Verizon Foundation's contribution helps continue our commitment to using technology in the classroom and increasing professional development as we implement new standards through the Tennessee Diploma Project."

Verizon Thinkfinity offers elementary through high school teachers resources across eight academic disciplines, including science, English and math, to improve student achievement.

The grant was announced at the Department of Education's annual Tennessee Education Technology Conference. The grant will be used to provide professional development opportunities to classroom teachers statewide through on-site and online training.

Each year the conference offers training sessions, labs, workshops, interest sessions and peer networking. The goal is to encourage participants to integrate technology into the classroom lesson plans. The event will include a trade show with exhibits showcasing the newest technologies, related software and services of interest to the education technology market.

Connected Tennessee Digital Inclusion Work Highlighted at FCC Public Hearing, Capping a Year of Memorable Accomplishments

Memphis, TN -The digital inclusion work of Connected Tennessee was highlighted during a recent Federal Communications Commission's field hearing in Memphis.

Connected Tennessee's executive director Michael Ramage took part in one of a series of the FCC's public hearings promoting an open discussion between the commission and the public on the development of a national broadband plan.

In Tennessee, work to provide expanded access to and use of broadband has seen significant success. Since Connected Tennessee's 2007 inception, more than 250,000 Tennesseans have gained access to broadband.

Connected Tennessee has accomplished this goal by involving all of



Tennessee's 95 counties in a technology planning and outreach process called eCommunity Strategies (eCS). Through this process, each county creates local leadership teams comprised of leaders from both the private and public sector. These teams work to create county-level technology plans in order to address a particular county's challenges related to technology growth.

"It is rewarding to be able to share the successes Connected Tennessee has been met with over the past two years as we work to expand digital inclusion for all of our citizens," remarked Michael Ramage. "I would like to thank the FCC for asking me to participate in this very important discussion as they strive to create a national broadband plan that allows all Americans to benefit from the benefits afforded by a high-speed connection."

In addition to the eCS process, Connected Tennessee has also distributed more than 2,100 computers to children, families and community-based organizations through its Computers 4 Kids program. In October, Connected Tennessee's Computers 4 Kids program was awarded a "community service" award at the 7th annual TechStar Awards in Kingsport. The honor was given for the program's commitment of time and to improve the community through technology.

APSI partners with Chattanooga State Technical Community College to offer two new programs designed for unemployed, dislocated and military veterans

If you have a New Year's resolution to go back to school, APSI, Charlotte's expert in vocational training and consulting services, is now working with Chattanooga State Technical Community College (CSTCC) through an academic partnership to offer students continuing education certifications in fast-growing job markets. Residents of Chattanooga and surrounding markets seeking high-demand occupational training can now take these courses at the Chattanooga State Technical Community College location.

"We are thrilled to collaborate with CSTCC to deliver the highest quality training and education. This partnership delivers job-ready candidates to industries that have employee vacancies in the Tennessee region and around the US," says Scott Coulter, CEO at APSI.

This academic partnership's goal is to offer courses, get people certified and help them find employment working with fiber optic and Cisco networking technology. APSI and CSTCC are working with local employers to help fill the skill gap in broadband technologies for that region. APSI strives to improve the economic status of hard-hit areas by helping unemployed, military veterans and dislocated workers become employable in a high-demand market.

APSI trains and certifies people with skills to actively engage the emerging broadband infrastructure market. APSI's CTO, James Burns says, "This program provides the opportunity for individuals to get the academic credentials needed to be employed for current and future jobs in the broadband and infrastructure industries and that is why the leadership at APSI and its academic partners are committed to the success of the program."

APSI and CSTCC will offer two major programs starting in December 2009:

*** Broadband Fiber Optic Program that provides graduates with two globally-recognized credentials in Premise Cabling and Fiber Optic Technology**

*** Broadband Networking Program will offer graduates with three globally-recognized credentials. Two will be within the physical layer of infrastructure and one covering the Enterprise level networking and OSI Model**

APSI's Workforce Development Program delivers high-quality training to unemployed, dislocated workers, military veteran and vocational trainees interested in employment in one of the fastest growing markets in the country. The partnership with CSTCC will also allow corporate partners the ability to send employees for "Advanced" training in Network Design, Fiber to the Home, Advanced Fiber Optics, Advanced Cisco Certifications, Fiber Connectors and Splicing to increase the skill level of existing staff members. This partnership is designed to offer a full service offering to both the residents and corporate community.

Visit APSI at www.apsicorp.com or CSTCC at www.chattanooga.state.edu for more information.

Connected Tennessee Debuts Latest Innovation in Broadband Mapping



At Connected Tennessee's recent quarterly Steering Committee Meeting, executive director Michael Ramage demonstrated for the first time a new interactive mapping tool for viewing, analyzing and validating broadband data that will soon be available via the Connected Tennessee website at www.connectedtn.org. Called BroadbandStat, the new interactive mapping platform is a multi-

functional, user-friendly way for local leaders, policymakers, consumers and technology providers to devise a plan for the expansion and adoption of broadband.

BroadbandStat was developed by Connected Nation in conjunction with ESRI, a market leader in geographic information system (GIS) software.

For Bob Mayfield, managing partner of Electronic Communications Sys-

tems, a small broadband provider in west Tennessee, the new tool will be extremely helpful as his company plans further coverage.

"BroadbandStat is a very important tool," Mayfield said. "For providers to be able to look at the market as we are developing our business plans - to see where broadband exists and where the demand is - this is the best thing that's come out in a while."

Daryl Phillips, executive director of the Hickman County Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD), agreed.

"Five years ago, we had local business owners that couldn't decide where to locate within the county because they didn't have access to this kind of detailed information," Phillips said. "Now, business and industry can use this tool for relocation decisions, home buyers can use this while shopping for a home and government and ECD can use it for planning purposes. BroadbandStat gives Tennessee an advantage over other states."

BroadbandStat is unique because it allows a user to build and evaluate broadband expansion scenarios using a wealth of data, including education and population demographics, current broadband speeds and availability and research about the barriers to adoption. The tool also provides an instant feedback mechanism for consumers to validate broadband data electronically or via phone.

The tool will be useful for government agencies, consumers, community leaders, broadband providers and the media. The broadband-related data can be used for grant writing, broadband investment and economic development, and it gives the public the ability to find information about broadband providers, down to the street level.

BroadbandStat is scheduled to launch by late 2009 to early 2010 in Tennessee.



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2009 Connected Tennessee Highlights

- Since Connected Tennessee's 2007 inception, more than 250,000 additional Tennesseans have access to broadband.
- All 95 counties in TN are engaged in the eCS process.
- 560 community meetings completed.
- More than 10,000 broadband inquiries received.
- 2,151 computers distributed through Computers 4 Kids (C4K).
- In October, C4K was recognized at the 7th Annual TechStar Awards luncheon in Kingsport, winning the "Community Service" award for commitment of time and resources to improve the community through technology.
- On December 23, 2009, Connected Tennessee, in conjunction with the State of Tennessee, was awarded \$1.8 million in federal funding for broadband mapping and planning in an effort to increase the availability and use of high-speed Internet service in the state.