



Connect Iowa Second Annual Broadband Summit Draws Huge Crowd

***Governor Terry Branstad stressed importance of legislation passage
and highlighted major gains in adoption and access***

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Des Moines – On Monday, June 16, Connect Iowa hosted the second annual Broadband Summit in Ankeny at the FFA Enrichment Center, with its largest crowd - drawing fifty more attendees than last year. Iowa Governor Terry Branstad was a keynote speaker; he stressed the importance of legislation passage and highlighted major gains in adoption and access. Other keynote speakers included John Adelstein, President & CEO of PCIA, and Mark Lewellen, Manager of Spectrum Advocacy for John Deere.

"I'm happy to report the Connect Every Iowan initiative has been greeted warmly by Iowans throughout the state, from small business owners, to Internet providers, to public safety officials and beyond," said Branstad. "We plan to continue working to bring high-speed Internet access to all corners of the state, not just to population and industrial centers. Our broadband legislation needs to happen to make Iowa the most connected state in the Midwest."

"Every business that you know is being transformed by broadband," said Adelstein. "The people in this room are the ones that are really helping to connect Iowa, so let's figure out how we can work together...to build the best in healthcare, to build the best in education, and library service and public safety to everybody."

Tom Ferree, Connected Nation President & COO, provided a national perspective of broadband in comparison to Connect Iowa's latest broadband availability figures. Ferree also acted as the moderator for the digital job creations panel.

"The turn out for the second annual Broadband Summit was impressive, bringing together legislators, state leaders, industry professionals, local champions, and sector leaders to discuss broadband efforts across the state of Iowa," said Ferree. "We've seen exciting growth in broadband availability and adoption in Iowa over the past years. It is Connect Iowa's goal to

keep that momentum going into the future so that all Iowans have the same access to the Internet and are able to leverage all that broadband has to offer; this will be the focus for our future work.”

Connect Iowa hosted more than 170 stakeholders, broadband providers, healthcare companies, educators, and community representatives, including attendees throughout the nation via webcast. The event was sponsored by Mediacom Business, AT&T, the Iowa Economic Development Authority, Renew Rural Iowa, Iowa Network Services, Des Moines Area Community College, and the Great Lakes Communication Corp.

The meeting included a review of legislative initiatives to expand broadband access, adoption, and use in Iowa. Panelists from the Iowa Legislature discussed progress made on broadband-related legislation in 2014.

Connect Iowa and sponsors presented two Broadband Hero awards. The Broadband Hero award for access was given to the Sac & Fox Tribes of Mississippi in Iowa ([read more about their efforts on our blog](#)). The Broadband Hero award for adoption and use was given to John Carver, Superintendent of Howard-Winneshiek CSD ([read more about Carver's efforts on our blog](#)).

Photo: From left to right: Amy Kuhlers, Program Manager, Connect Iowa; Janice Eagle Hawk, IT Director and Larry Lasley, Economic Development Director and Chairman of the Board, both from The Sac & Fox Tribe of Mississippi in Iowa; John Carver, Superintendent of the Howard-Winneshiek Community School District; and Kellie Beneke, President of Great Lakes Communication Corp. celebrate the Broadband Hero Awards at the 2014 Connect Iowa Broadband Summit.

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About Connect Iowa: Connect Iowa is a subsidiary of Connected Nation and operates as a nonprofit in the state of Iowa to promote broadband access, adoption, and use. The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) is leading the initiative to increase broadband Internet access throughout rural Iowa. Connect Iowa was commissioned by the state to work with all broadband providers in Iowa to create detailed maps of broadband coverage and develop a statewide plan for the deployment and adoption of broadband. For more information, visit: www.connectiowa.org.

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