



Inaugural Iowa Statewide Broadband Summit to Focus on Empowering Communities

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First annual Summit is free to public & will address Iowa education, job creation, and local economic development through broadband access, adoption, and use

Des Moines, IA – Today, Connect Iowa is pleased to announce the keynote and all-star lineup for the state's first Broadband Summit taking place in Des Moines next month. The event, called [Empowering Communities](#), will bring state, county, and local leaders together to discuss local engagement and local issues surrounding broadband expansion and the critical role technology is playing in Iowa's economic future.

"Broadband is very important in our efforts to improving education, creating more jobs and providing more efficient government services," said Debi Durham, the director of the Iowa Economic Development Authority. "Whether you live in rural or urban Iowa, connecting our communities is vital to the future prosperity of our state."

The one-day meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 9, at the Iowa State Historical Society in Des Moines. The summit is being co-hosted by nonprofit [Connect Iowa](#) in collaboration with the [Iowa Economic Development Authority](#) (IEDA).

American Rural founder and CEO [Diane Smith](#) is set to give the keynote address with emphasis on how there's never been a better time to live and work in Rural America. Iowa Economic Development Authority Director Debi Durham will speak on the state's current economic outlook along with many other presenters and panelists that are scheduled to support the mission of sending attendees back home with reliable tools to empower their communities! There will be several chances for attendees to interact directly with grant awardees, providers, and stakeholders through Q&A panels and direct conversations to get connected to limitless opportunities.

"Connect Iowa is focusing on expanding broadband access, adoption, and use by designing and implementing regional broadband deployment strategies," says Connect Iowa State Program Manager Amy Kuhlert. "The plans will include partners from both the public and private sectors, all working together on local and regional technology planning, technical assistance, and ultimately, increased broadband adoption and digital literacy."

Several tools and interactive resources will be demonstrated during the summit. Anyone with an interest in championing local broadband expansion in his or her Iowa community is encouraged to attend and contribute to the discussion by submitting questions through [Connect Iowa Twitter](#) using hash tag [#IABroadband](#).

To register now for the free event, please visit the Connect Iowa website at www.connectiowa.org/broadband-summit. The deadline to RSVP is Friday, April 5. For further information, please contact Amy Kuhlert at (515) 421-2561 or akuhlert@connectiowa.org.

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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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