



Manchester Kicks-Off Program to Harness Power of Technology

Manchester enlists in Connect Iowa's Connected program to bridge technology gap, boost economy, pave way for improved quality of life

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Manchester, IA – Manchester community leaders held a kickoff meeting July 29 to join Connect Iowa's [Connected Community Engagement Program](#) that seeks to boost the local economy and quality of life for residents through increased access, adoption, and use of broadband.

The Connected Community Engagement Program facilitates assessments of local broadband access, adoption, and use. The goal of the program is to help develop strategies to better harness the power of technology in order to stimulate local economic growth. The Connected program seeks to increase the number of high-tech companies and jobs, ensure that schools have sufficient access to broadband, and maximize technology options for healthcare, libraries, local government, and citizens.

"Technology opens the door to the future. From healthcare to education, agriculture to business – everything we do now, we can do better, faster and more efficiently," said Donna Boss, executive director of Delaware County Economic Development and co-champion of the Manchester assessment team. "Making broadband technology a reality for the citizens of this community places a world of opportunities at their fingertips."

The meeting was held at the Manchester Regional Education Partnership meeting room in Manchester with 13 participants. Representatives in attendance were from the city, county, economic development, chamber, school district, hospital, county extension, community college, and several business leaders. Participating in the Connected program will require an extensive assessment of overall broadband and technology innovation in Manchester. The committee will be reaching out to others in the community to complete the assessment as needed.

"We are excited to be a part of this important initiative that will put our residents on the information superhighway," said Jack Klaus, executive director, Manchester Chamber of Commerce and Manchester assessment team co-champion. "As our world becomes increasingly technology-driven, we don't want to be left behind. 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.”

For more information about the project or to join the Connected community technology team, please contact Connect Iowa at info@connectiowa.org, or Connect Iowa Program Manager Amy Kuhlert at (515) 421-2561.

Boss can be reached at dboss@delawarecountytia.com or by phone at 563-927-3325.

Manchester will begin the assessment process immediately and hopes to have the process completed by fall of 2014.

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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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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.

<http://www.connectednation.org/get-connected>