



North Carolina Hearts Gigabit: An Interactive Idea Exchange

📍 | N.C. Rural Economic Development Center
4021 Cary Drive Raleigh, NC

🕒 | Friday, April 20 at 9:00 am

Broadband = Jobs

Broadband = Education

Broadband = Healthcare

Broadband = Public Safety

Broadband = Civic Engagement

Broadband = Economic Development

What steps do North Carolina communities need to take now to grow more digitally connected and economically resilient? NC Broadband Matters, a nonprofit formed in 2017, seeks to answer this essential question through the engagement and education campaign NC Hearts Gigabit (North Carolina “loves” Gigabit). A technology neutral and vendor agnostic advocacy platform, we work to attract and support universally available, affordable, reliable, high-capacity Internet to network resilient local economies across North Carolina. This inaugural conference will feature inspiring community broadband network deployment success stories from around the state: How to build it, finance it and use it to deepen local cultures of connectivity and productivity for the 21st century. Attendees will benefit from hearing a playbook of actionable steps they can take back to advance their own local broadband and economic development agendas. Join us!

Speakers



Alan Fitzpatrick

CEO, Open Broadband
Co-Founder, NC Broadband Matters

Alan is a tech company founder balancing engineering and operations with marketing, sales and business development. He is the former COO of DC74 Data Centers and is the founder and CEO of Open Broadband, offering hybrid fiber and fixed wireless ISP solutions to bring fast and reliable broadband internet to communities. Alan co-founded Charlotte Hearts Gigabit, the social media campaign that inspired the formation of NC Broadband Matters. He serves as treasurer.



Catharine Rice

Project Director, CLIC
Co-Founder, NC Broadband Matters

For more than a decade Catharine has been a broadband consultant serving North Carolina communities in planning and deploying local broadband systems. She is currently the Project Director for the CLIC and President for the Virginia Chapter of NATOA. Catharine spearheaded the formation of the North Carolina "fiber lunches" which eventually evolved into NC Broadband Matters. She now serves as the group's secretary.



Christa Wagner Vinson

Co-Founder, NC Broadband Matters

Christa is an economic developer based in Charlotte, N.C., whose consultancy supports regional and national nonprofits and state and local governments in the creation of innovative, community-led solutions that support quality jobs and drive sustainable growth. She is a co-founder and serves as president of NC Broadband Matters.



Deb Watts

Partner, Broadband Catalysts
Co-Founder, NC Broadband Matters

Prior to her role as partner with Broadband Catalysts, Deb served for 15 years as senior director of research and development for the e-NC Authority/NC Broadband, designing, funding and evaluating national best practice models for increasing broadband Internet access and utilization. She is a co-founder and serves as vice president of NC Broadband Matters.



Adam Eisner

VP, Networks, Ting Internet

Adam Eisner is VP of Networks and leads the team that evaluates, builds and operates fiber to the home (FTTH) markets across the United States for Ting Internet, a retail Internet Service Provider. The public-private partnership model between Ting and Holly Springs, North Carolina demonstrates a successful local solution to broadband provision.



Representative Craig Horn

NC House of Representatives

D. Craig Horn, a former Russian linguist with the United States Air Force Security Service, is a retired food broker and businessman. Elected in 2010, Craig is now in his third term in the North Carolina General Assembly representing District 68 in Union County. He is chairman of both the House committee on Appropriations for Education and the House Education Policy Committee for K-12 Education, and serves on six other House committees.



Dan Gerlach

President, Golden LEAF Foundation

Since October 2008, Dan Gerlach has served as president of the Golden LEAF Foundation. Since its inception, the Foundation has awarded 1,427 grants totaling more than \$700 million to 501(c)(3) nonprofits and governmental entities.



Eric Cramer

President & Ceo Wilkes Communications/RiverStreet

Eric Cramer is President & CEO at Wilkes Communications / RiverStreet Networks and has over twenty years of experience in telecommunications regulatory and financial consulting and operational management.



Grant Goings

City Manager, City of Wilson

Grant Goings has led the City of Wilson as City Manager since January 2005, which included the deployment of Greenlight, Wilson's municipal fiber network. He currently co-chairs Innovate Wilson with the Institute for Emerging Issues' InnovateNC project, guiding Wilson's plan to encourage the local innovation economy. Goings serves on many state and local boards and is First Vice President of the North Carolina City and County Management Association.



Hunter Goosmann

Executive Director/CEO, ERC

Hunter Goosmann is Executive Director of ERC, a project of the Education and Research Consortium of the Western Carolinas, Inc. He has worked nationally and internationally in the telecommunications and information technology fields gaining specific expertise in strategic planning, customer support/service delivery, and program management.



The Honorable James B. Hunt

69th and 71st Governor of North Carolina

Former Gov. Jim Hunt (1977-1985, 1993-2001) served four historic terms as governor of North Carolina. His legacy of leadership honed North Carolina's potential into an inclusive, future-focused reality.



Jane Nickles

CIO, City of Greensboro

Jane Nickles is CIO of the City of Greensboro and an accomplished PMF and ITIL certified IT professional with career experience as an IT Project Manager, IT Infrastructure Manager, Database Administrator and Software Engineer in a large scale network environment.



Jane Smith Patterson

Partner, Broadband Catalysts

Jane Smith Patterson is a longtime digital technology advocate and former cabinet member for Governor Jim Hunt. She was founding Executive Director of the eNC Authority and is currently a rural broadband advisor with Broadband Catalysts.



Jeff Sural

Director, NC Broadband Infrastructure Office

Jeff Sural joined the North Carolina Department of Information Technology in January 2015 as the Director of the Broadband Infrastructure Office (BIO). With the stated mission of creating the nation's first giga-state by 2021, BIO leads the statewide initiative to expand high-speed internet access for all North Carolinians, focusing its resources on underserved rural communities.



Joanne Hovis

CEO, CLIC
President, CTC Technology & Energy

Joanne Hovis an attorney with a background in communications and commercial litigation and is CEO and a co-founder of the Coalition for Local Internet Choice (CLIC). She is also president of CTC Technology & Energy, where she directs the firm's work in network business planning, market analysis, financial modeling, policy, strategy and management consulting.



John Coggin

Director of Advocacy, NC Rural Center

John is the director of advocacy at the NC Rural Center. He leads statewide grassroots engagement and state and federal government relations to make progress on core rural economic development strategies, including finding solutions for adopting accessible, affordable high-speed broadband in our rural communities.



John Graham

Senior Investigator, UNC-CH Gillings School for Public Health

Dr. Graham is currently a Senior Investigator at the UNC-CH Gillings School for Global Public Health. In this role and as the former Deputy Director of the N.C. Institute for Public Health, Dr. Graham has designed and coordinated a range of health information technology and informatics projects including the North Carolina Telehealth Network (NCTN), a consortium of the FCC's Healthcare Connect program and a statewide dedicated broadband network designed to support the substantial networking demands of the healthcare community, especially rural healthcare providers.



Jordana Barton

Senior Advisor
Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas

Jordana supports the Federal Reserve System's economic growth objectives by promoting community and economic development and fair and impartial access to credit. Her focus areas include the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), community development finance, digital inclusion, financial education, affordable housing, workforce development, and small business development.



Mark DeFalco

Telecommunications Initiative
Manager, Appalachian Regional
Commission

Mark DeFalco has worked in the telecommunications industry for over 30 years. He has worked for a regional Bell company, a rural telephone holding company, a large inter-exchange carrier and several competitive local exchange carriers. He is currently Telecommunications Initiative Manager for the Appalachian Regional Commission where he addresses rural telecom and broadband issues.



Mark Johnson

Chief Technology Officer and Vice
President of Data Architecture,
MCNC

Mark Johnson's career encompasses over 25 years of leadership experience in the management, engineering, and operations of Internet technologies. During his tenure at MCNC, he has overseen the transformation of the North Carolina Research and Education Network (NCREN) and led MCNC's activities as a founding member of the North Carolina Networking Initiative. He has been involved in Internet2 since its inception and is past chair of The Quilt, a national consortium of regional research and education network operators.



Matt Dunne

Founder and Executive Director, Center
for Rural Innovation

Matt is Founder and Executive Director of the Vermont-based Center on Rural Innovation, a network of rural innovation hubs designed to spark the revival of small towns across America. In 2007, Matt started Google's Community Affairs division out of a former bread factory in White River Jct, VT, where he led all local US philanthropy and engagement, including the Google Fiber rollout.



Patrick Woodie

President and CEO

Patrick Woodie serves as president of the N.C. Rural Economic Development Center. He was previously the Vice President of Rural Programs. Prior to his work at the Rural Center, Patrick was executive director of New River Community Partners and the Blue Ridge Business Development Center in Sparta, N.C., both nonprofits engaged in community and economic development. He served one term as Alleghany County (N.C.) commissioner and was a founding member of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.



Red Grasso

SPOC, FirstNet North Carolina

Red Grasso is the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for the FirstNet project in North Carolina. Previously, he spent a decade as a firefighter with the Town of Morrisville. Focusing on public safety communications, he has served in many roles at different levels of government including disaster response at the local, state, and federal levels.



The Honorable Roy Cooper

Governor, State of North Carolina

Governor Roy Cooper has spent nearly three decades in public service protecting families, keeping communities safe and working to create jobs and improve schools. Born and raised in Nash County, he attended public schools and worked summers on the family farm before attending UNC-Chapel Hill on a Morehead Scholarship. After earning a law degree from UNC, Cooper returned home to Nash County to practice law. He previously served in the NC House and Senate and as Attorney General, before being elected governor in 2016.



Sig Hutchinson

Vice Chair, Wake County Board of Commissioners

Sig Hutchinson has served on the Wake County Board of Commissioners since 2014 and is currently vice chair of the board. He served as vice chair in 2015 and chair in 2016. Sig is known in Wake County for his longtime efforts to preserve open space, expand the greenway system, and make communities healthy and livable. He has successfully led six bond referendums totaling more than \$300 million in Wake County and the City of Raleigh for open space preservation, parks, greenways, transportation and affordable housing.



Terry Cox

Executive Director, Gaston Innovation Group, Inc

Terry is President and CEO of Business Innovation and Growth (BIG) Council, a high-growth entrepreneurial support organization for the Charlotte region serving over 500 companies since 2006, and Executive Director of Gaston GIG, which runs TechWorks, a new organization supporting economic growth in Gaston County.

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Gigabit benefits + 3rd ticket + Copy of attendee list



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Schedule

9:00 – 9:30 AM	Pre-session networking time	
9:30 - 10:00 AM	Welcome	NC Broadband Matters Board of Directors Patrick Woodie, President and CEO, NC Rural Center Commissioner Sig Hutchinson, Wake County Board of Commissioners The Honorable Roy Cooper, Governor State of North Carolina
10:00 – 11:00 AM	BUILD IT Showcasing how local communities have built modern broadband networks from the grassroots up by exhaustively assessing options and then making hard decisions. Featuring private service providers, public-private partnerships, small ISPs, co-op models and more.	Moderator: Mark Johnson, CTO, MCNC Adam Eisner, VP Networks, Ting/Holly Springs, NC Alan Fitzpatrick, CEO, Open Broadband Eric Cramer, Pres & CEO, Wilkes Communications/RiverStreet Networks Hunter Goosmann, Executive Director, ERC Jane Nickles, CIO, City of Greensboro
11:15 AM – 12:30 PM	FINANCE IT What do community leaders need to know about financing network build-out? Federal and state funding options, creative private financing, and new tools under development will be discussed.	Moderator: Jeff Sural, Director, NC Broadband Infrastructure Office Dan Gerlach, President, Golden LEAF Foundation Joanne Hovis, CEO, CLIC Jordana Barton, Senior Advisor, Dallas Fed Mark DeFalco, Manager, Appalachian Regional Commission
12:30 – 1:45 PM	KEYNOTE LUNCH: BROADBAND LEADERSHIP FOR THE 21st CENTURY ECONOMY	Introduction: Jane Smith Patterson Keynote Speaker: The Honorable James B. Hunt
2:00 – 3:30 PM	USING IT If you build gigabit networks, do the high-tech jobs automatically follow? How do public officials approach infrastructure investment for the digital era? Policy experts and community development leaders offer strategic approaches to using broadband to deploy essential public services– healthcare, education, safety and other government services – that are also conducive to building local environments that attract and create jobs and support workforce development.	Session Introduction: Representative Craig Horn, North Carolina House Moderator: Deb Watts, Partner, Broadband Catalysts Dr. John Graham, NC Telehealth Network Grant Goings, City Manager, City of Wilson Matt Dunne, Center on Rural Innovation Red Grasso, SPOC, FirstNet NC Terry Cox, Executive Director, Gaston GIG, Inc
3:30 PM	Closing Remarks	John Coggin, Director of Advocacy, NC Rural Center Christa Wagner Vinson and Deb Watts, NC Broadband Matters
3:45 - 4:30 PM	OPTIONAL WORKSHOP: SHARING IT Free broadband mapping tools from Broadband Catalyst and others, plus conference-wide planning discussion	Brian Rathbone, Broadband Catalysts Jeff Sural, North Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Office

Thanks to our sponsors!



About NC Broadband Matters

NC Broadband Matters coordinates NC Hearts Gigabit, a campaign to attract and support universally available, affordable, reliable, high-capacity Internet across North Carolina.

By telling the stories of North Carolina communities building, financing and using gigabit broadband, we believe it will be possible to network resilient local economies that:

- * Re-energize our state's history of technology leadership
- * Deepen our commitment to a future of work for all North Carolinians that offers full employment, protects privacy and enables widely-shared prosperity
- * Restores local competitiveness through genuine regional growth strategies that facilitate strong communities of producers, innovators, entrepreneurs, small businesses and emerging industries

