



**Hempstead County
Connected Communities**



Hempstead County Connected Communities

- Vision
 - The most “Connected County” in AR, the bandwidth you need, where you need it, when you need it
- Mission/Goals
 - Enhance “Affordable” Broadband access via the most cost effective mix of “Best Fit” technologies, from DSL and Cable to Broadband over Power Line (BPL)
 - Educate business, industry and the people of SW AR for what Broadband access can do to enhance their lives and businesses
 - Share the lessons learned and best practices throughout Arkansas with other “Connected Communities”



Hempstead County Connected Communities

- Background issues
 - Local challenges facing business and industry
 - Long term community and business efforts
 - Other challenges and opportunities foreseen
- How we got involved?
 - Does dumb luck count???
 - AUTIS and Rural Telecom Conference
 - Community support for the application process
 - All aspects of the community



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- Involvement Includes
 - Strategic Planning – Leadership Development
 - Study action teams – research focus areas
 - Focus Teams: Areas Covered Later Slide
 - Information and education campaign
 - Radio and TV interviews, Newspaper Articles/Series, E-Mail, One-on One!
 - Leading experts workshops – Best Practices
 - Area Broadband surveys: Hope High School and UACCH IT students, Home and Business



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- Anticipated Benefits
 - New employment opportunities – all sectors
 - “New Business” Opportunities
 - For Example: (Insert Audience Participation Here)
 - Increased K-12/Higher Ed/ Workforce Ed programs focused on new technologies
 - Reduction in “Brain Drain”, loss of our best/brightest students
 - Keep them here with new and challenging job opportunities – Hempstead County not Dallas!



Hempstead County Connected Communities

- First Year Study Action Teams / Focus Groups Lessons Learned – You Need Champions To Facilitate The Action
 - Access and Infrastructure – Planning, time and \$\$, infrastructure information is very hard to get!
 - Community Awareness/Marketing – Inclusiveness
 - Parks and Tourism – Opportunities Abound! CIV
 - Government – Informed Supportive Leaders
 - Business and Industry – Must Speak their Language, Wait and See Attitude!



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- First Year Study Action Teams / Focus Groups Lessons Learned (Continued)
 - Education – K12/Higher Ed/Workforce Ed – Training to prep the community is key, upcoming project plans ...
 - E-Health – Lost team Leader +, floundered a bit, RE-DO and Refocus in 2008! Some Success!
 - Non-Profits – Created later in the year, ROC Test Case! Continue 2008 Focus
 - Agriculture and Forestry – Late Bloomer, continued focus for 2008 too! Education/Grants



Hempstead County Connected Communities

- First Year Study Action Teams / Focus Groups Lessons Learned (Continued)
 - Overall – Establishing 501 © 3 Status -- \$\$\$
 - Continue to seek partnerships and grant funding
 - Education and information campaign vital to help manage unrealistic community expectations!!!
 - Select a few broadband projects to highlight successes, usefulness and needs



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- Questions and Answers??
- Suggestions? We are still open to new Ideas and Grant Opportunities!