



Dear Smart Rural Community provider,

Connection. It's at the heart of the Smart Rural CommunitySM (SRC) program, as you connect your communities to a host of benefits, including better health.

Connection is also at the heart of what we do at NTCA, and the reason I love my job so much. Advocating for rural broadband has been the honor of my career and I will miss my connection with this incredible community when I retire next year, yet I feel such optimism about the health and future of broadband with dedicated SRC providers like yourselves. But I'm not leaving yet, so let's talk about local broadband and better health.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, which is a good reminder to examine the role that technology can play in the wellbeing of survivors. The amazing Liz Kohler of Nexion Solutions, who created an innovative wearable device for emergency response, spoke at SRC Live! two years ago. One attendee took that information back home and connected survivors in her community to the device. The resulting chain of wellbeing demonstrates the collaboration that SRC promotes — connecting rural broadband providers with other local leaders, including public safety and healthcare providers. More on this collaboration is below.

There is another group of Americans that need our collective help: our seniors. From online banking to social media engagement and video streaming, the opportunities to fall victim to the latest scam or plain old digital confusion are plentiful, which is why I'm delighted to share that SRC has produced an educational series for seniors to help keep them safe online. I encourage you to read more below about our [Senior Safety Series](#), and to host a training session in your community soon!

I also want to congratulate the 2025 SRC Showcase Award Winners, who exemplify

how local broadband providers deliver positive outcomes by promoting rural broadband networks and their broadband-enabled applications in rural communities. In this newsletter, we specifically call out two of this year's winners, United Communications (Franklin, Tenn.) and West Carolina (Abbeville, S.C.), who delivered impact in the health arena.

Finally, mark your calendars for National Rural Health Day on November 20. It's a perfect opportunity to get the word out to your stakeholders about the amazing transformation that broadband has delivered. Your networks enable innovative solutions in health care: connecting rural hospitals, providing critical telehealth options and other vital services so that people can lead rich lives in rural communities. Thanks for everything you do!

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shirley".

Shirley Bloomfield
CEO, NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association

Program Resources



SRC Company Partners with Local Heroes to Support Life-Changing Solutions

In June 2023, [Smart Rural Community](#) (SRC) hosted a panel discussion featuring Liz Kohler, founder and CEO of [Nexion Solutions](#), and Judge Frederick T. Moses

of Hocking, Ohio. Their panel conversation at SRC Live! focused on substance abuse and domestic violence, both of which see proportionally higher incidences in rural than urban areas, and how they each relied on connected technology to address those issues. The panel and ensuing conversation sparked a partnership between an SRC provider and a community domestic crisis nonprofit.

Despite the session title, “The Things We Don’t Like to Talk About,” there was plenty of talking. Judge Moses - a prior beneficiary of a Foundation for Rural Service grant to deploy technology in his court - observed that most people in his courtroom had never anticipated they would be in the situations that brought them there, citing the incidence of substance addictions that stemmed from medically prescribed interventions. Kohler shared stories that fueled her inspiration to create a wearable device that offers protection for domestic victims.

Kohler was inspired to create the Nexion solution when a witness at a District Attorney victim services office asked her, “Isn’t there something you can do to protect me when I’m not at home?” Traditional safety measures like home security systems and hotels provided only limited protection. In contrast, the Nexion device that Kohler created offers users active monitoring and instant contact to law enforcement support — innovative technology that won a Consumer Electronics Show (CES) award.



After hearing the panelists at SRC Live!, Elizabeth Brown, marketing manager at [Panhandle Telephone Cooperative Inc.](#) (PTCI, Guymon, Okla), took the conversation back to her community, and eventually, to Northwest Domestic Crisis Services (NWDCS).

During a conversation with a friend who worked as a university counselor, Brown recalled that SRC panel. Her immediate response: “We have got to do something to bring this technology home.” PTCI partnered with NWDCS and Nexion to use Kohler’s product to protect domestic violence survivors. To date, they’ve deployed devices across their 10-county coverage area, representing 20% of Oklahoma.

Brown said the Nexion model makes technology implementation efficient and accessible, adding, “It’s finding the right partner, knowing who to talk to, and getting together.” The PTCI/NWDCS partnership combines innovation with the human, relationship-driven nature of rural communities - showing how rural broadband providers can use infrastructure as well as their local ties and affiliations to meet critical social needs.

The complete story, including detailed implementation strategies and lessons learned, provides comprehensive guidance for rural communities considering similar life-saving partnerships. [Read the full report here](#) for replication insights.



SRC Providers Recognized at NTCA Fall Conference

The SRC Showcase Awards were presented at the NTCA 2025 Fall Conference to recognize SRC providers' extraordinary achievements in promoting rural broadband networks and their applications in rural communities. Congratulations to the [2025 winners](#):

- Bulloch Solutions (Statesboro, Ga.)
- Home Telecom (Moncks Corner, S.C.)
- Lynxx Networks (Camp Douglas, Wis.)
- Rainbow Communications (Everest, Kan.)
- Truvista (Chester, S.C.)
- Twin Lakes (Gainesboro, Tenn.)
- United Communications (Franklin, Tenn.)
- West Carolina (Abbeville, S.C.)

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We also had some fun at the SRC Reception with superlative awards. Congratulations to:



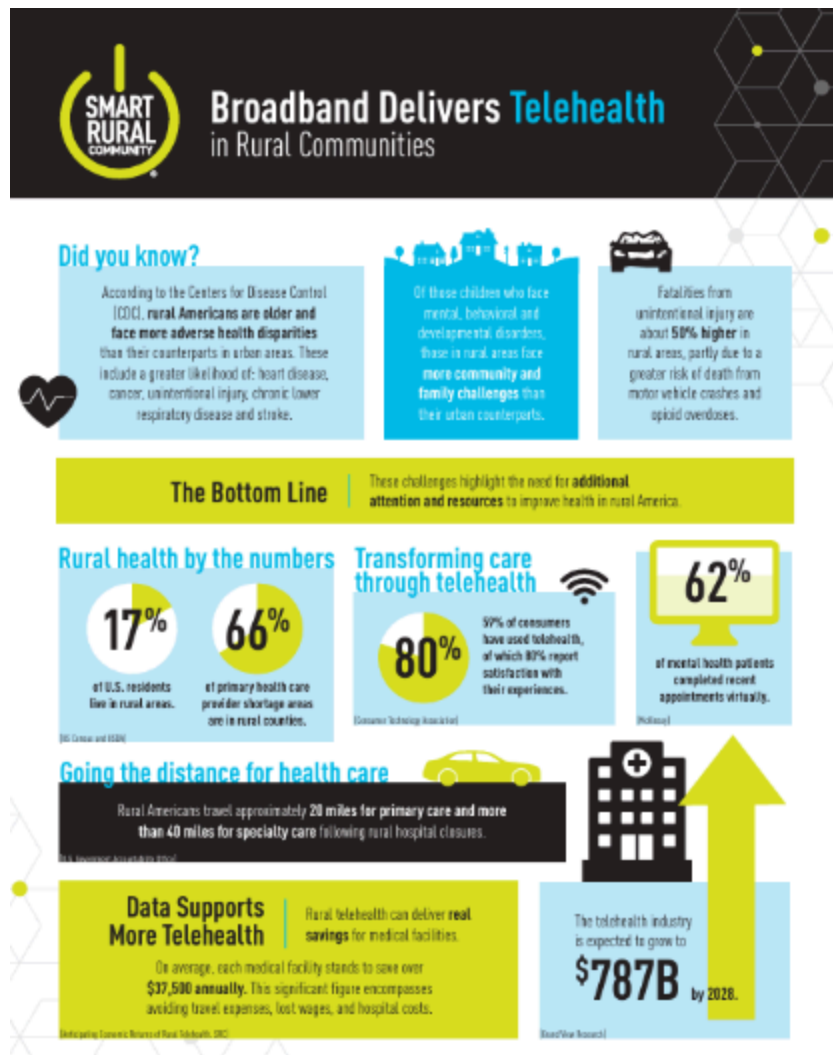
- SRC Pioneer Award: Rainbow Communications (Everest, Kan.)
- SRC Digital Excellence Award: Mosaic Technologies (Cameron, Wis.)
- SRC Brand Ambassador: Randolph Communications (Asheboro, N.C.)
- Master of Signs: Nex-Tech (Lenora, Kan.)

Spotlighting Two Showcase Winners Investing in Health

After Hurricane Helene hit **West Carolina's** service territory, the coop turned its offices into hubs where community members could charge devices, connect to the

internet and contact loved ones. Health services were critical, so West Carolina also stepped up to ensure that Self Regional Healthcare facility and Anderson County Emergency Services had the connectivity needed to provide emergency assistance.

United Communications launched Project UNITE, through which it has secured more than \$110 million in federal and state grants for broadband expansion, aligning deployment plans with the economic development strategies and needs of the communities it serves. One major need: telehealth. United Communications believes that everyone deserves access to quality healthcare, and delivering the option for telehealth is one of their biggest motivators for continue to connect their community.



Resources: Telehealth, Rural Health Day and Senior Safety

Telehealth: We hope you've been utilizing the [SRC website](#). It has all the assets you need to showcase the benefits of broadband for your community. Specifically for telehealth, check out:

- Extended Reality Telehealth for Rural Spaces [report](#)
- Broadband Delivers Telehealth [infographic](#)
- Get Started on Telehealth Today [video](#)



National Rural Health Day: Don't forget **National Rural Health Day** on November 20! Founded by the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH), National Rural Health Day recognizes and honors those whose work positively impacts the healthcare needs of rural Americans. This is a great opportunity to tell your stakeholders about the amazing health transformation that broadband has delivered. **Check out** NOSORH's social media and promotional tools and make sure that you celebrate the power of rural!



Senior Safety: Continuing the theme of wellbeing, SRC has produced an educational tool to protect seniors from cyber-attacks. The **Senior Safety Series** consists of three short, informative videos on: passwords and protecting yourself online, understanding phishing and how to spot it, and responding to data breaches. SRC providers can use the videos to host in-person training sessions or interactive workshops, in your office, your local library or senior centers.

On October 9, the SRC team hosted a Senior Safety day on NTCA social media channels to talk about the series and the work that SRC providers are doing to help educate seniors in their communities about online safety. Thank you to the SRC providers who participated!



Please continue to spread the word of your good work! And remember to use #SmartRuralCommunity and tag NTCA in the posts.



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adamsfiber Augusta Reaches a New Milestone! 🎉

We're excited to share that Augusta has been named a Smart Rural Community by NTCA - The Rural Broadband Association, thanks to the power of Adams Fiber!

Through an investment of more than \$1.23 million in cutting-edge fiber technology, Adams Fiber is helping Augusta unlock new possibilities. From stronger tools for students and teachers, to better access to telehealth, to everyday improvements in how we stay connected—this recognition reflects a brighter future for our community.

We were proud to celebrate this achievement alongside Mindi Kirkhart, mayor Donnie Hiland, Bridgette Northern, Kathy Bruns, and Danielle Flesner.

Here's to Augusta growing, thriving, and staying connected for generations to come!

#SmartRuralCommunity #BroadbandBuilds

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Mid Century Fiber

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Last night, Mid Century Board Director, [Ray McCausland](#) presented St. David Village Board President, Jason Myetich, with the [NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association #SmartRuralCommunity](#) designation during the village board meeting.

This recognition celebrates the leadership of St. David and their commitment to using high-speed broadband and community collaboration to drive real change in rural America. 🚀

From improved access to education and healthcare to expanding economic development and promoting digital inclusion, this village is making big moves toward a more connected future. 🏡

Backed by strong partnerships and a vision for long-term impact, St. David is proving that rural broadband is [#BroadbandBuiltToLast](#). 🏠

💬 Leave a comment to show your support for rural innovation!

[#SmartCommunities](#) [#ConnectedCommunities](#) [#RuralInnovation](#)



Farmer and Jackson Creek Receives Smart Rural Community Designation!



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randolphcommunications Randolph Communications proudly presented Farmer and Jackson Creek with the Smart Rural Community designation from NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association. This recognition celebrates the investment in cutting-edge fiber that delivers speeds up to 1 GIG! GIG, giving residents and businesses access to reliable internet for education, careers, healthcare, and more. Together, we're building stronger, more connected communities.

To learn more: <https://tmc.net/farmer-jackson-creek-smart-rural-community/>

#smartcommunity #randolphcommunications #gigspeed #connectedcommunities

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Post

This morning, we had the honor of announcing Salem, IL as a Smart Rural Community! The event was filled with incredible people from this amazing community, all working toward the best for Salem.

We are truly grateful to the City of Salem, everyone who attended, spoke, and made this event possible. It's a privilege to provide fiber internet to a community that is already doing amazing things, and we're excited to see what more can be achieved with reliable broadband.

We hope that recognizing Salem as a Smart Rural Community, along with providing our fiber service, will bring new businesses, residents, and opportunities to the area. Communities like Salem are a perfect example of what's possible when people have access to reliable internet, and we couldn't be more thankful to be part of it!

#SmartRuralCommunity #CommunityPartner



Thank You Sponsors

SRC Sponsor Spotlight: NISC

> NISC Program Helps Simplify Customer Data Capture

NISC's new **Program Management** tool helps NISC members automate and simplify program signups. Whether a provider is promoting a new or existing program, the customer signup is a critical step. While this process is typically seamless for the customer, providers can find it challenging to get the data to the right place or act on the captured information. Through backend automation, NISC's new tool enables you to define your program, collect and organize the necessary data, and track the program.

One use case is with scholarship programs, many of which are just starting a new cycle. Program Management allows scholarship applicants to submit their information via email, through your website, or via NISC's SmartHub application—

making signup simple and enabling you to easily query the data for future campaigns. Learn more at [NISC.coop](https://nisc.coop).

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