

Governor's Task Force on Connecting North Carolina
McDowell Technical Community College
Universal Advanced Manufacturing Center Conference Room
634 College Drive
Marion, NC 28752
September 23, 2019
4 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions (4 p.m.)

Eric Boyette, Secretary, North Carolina Department of Information Technology

Benjamin Money, Deputy Secretary for Health Services, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Telehealth in the Region: The delivery of health care via phone or video consultation has become more and more popular. With the advance of broadband and communication services health care providers are finding it an effective and efficient way to care for their patients. As doctor-deserts emerge in rural and economically distressed areas of our state, telehealth has emerged as a solution for patients seeking care. The Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Rural Health has created a telemedicine team and a plan to implement telehealth services across the state.

GREAT Grant Award Recognition (4:20 p.m.)

The Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) broadband grant program awarded 20 grants to improve broadband services in 18 Tier 1 counties. In Western North Carolina the following counties will benefit from projects supported by the grant program: McDowell and Macon (Morris Broadband) and Swain (Skywave) and Jackson (SkyFi).

Eric Boyette, Presenter

- *Grantee Representatives:*
 - *Tony Carter, General Manager, Morris Broadband*
 - *Travis Lewis, CEO, Sky-Fi Inc.*
 - *James Sutton, CEO, SkyWave Inc.*

- *County and Council of Government Representatives*

Local & Regional Planning Efforts (4:30 p.m.)

Communities around the state have taken steps to enhance the speed, quality and affordability of broadband. These initiatives include conducting community surveys, identifying unserved areas, securing funding and engaging private sector internet service providers. Two of the more successful efforts in the state are the McDowell County and Southwest Commission Council of Government initiatives.

Moderator: *Keith Conover, Regional Technical Assistant Coordinator, NCDIT Broadband Infrastructure Office*

Chuck Abernathy, Economic Development, McDowell County

*Russ Harris, Director of Community and Economic Development
Southwestern Commission*

Agency Updates and Discussion (5 p.m.)

- NC Dept of Information Technology
- NC Dept of Health and Human Services
- NC Dept of Commerce / Appalachian Regional Commission
- NC Dept of Administration
- NC Dept of Public Safety
- NC Dept of Transportation
- NC Dept of Natural and Cultural Resources
- NC Office of State Budget and Management

Adjourn (5:30 p.m.)