



## NTIA Launches Minority Broadband Initiative with Historically Black Colleges and Universities

On November 15, 2019, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) launched a new Minority Broadband Initiative (MBI) focused on solving broadband deployment challenges in vulnerable communities. NTIA announced the initiative at the 2019 Carolinas Alliance for Success in Education (CASE) Summit held at Johnson C. Smith University. The program seeks to ensure that Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) can

successfully advance broadband connectivity on their campuses and in their surrounding communities, enabling the participation of all Americans in the digital economy. NTIA's initiative will work with connected HBCUs, or "Smart HBCUs," to promote them as hubs of digital applications and innovation, and ensure their inclusion and awareness of broadband deployment grant opportunities. The MBI also will seek to partner with federal agencies, local governments, and the private sector to lay the groundwork for extensive expansion of broadband networks across HBCU campuses and throughout the rural South. [See more information here.](#) (Photo: Diane Rinaldo, Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information, at the CASE Summit on November 15, 2019.)

## Policy Corner

### Council to Secure the Digital Economy (CSDE) Forum in Washington, D.C. on November 21, 2019.

Highlights of remarks of Diane Rinaldo, Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information



Botnets are a global problem, and a challenge for the entire Internet ecosystem. Industry alone – government alone – can't solve these continually evolving security challenges, working separately. But working together, we can make progress. The model NTIA proposed in our botnet report allows for private-sector stakeholders to lead the way. Where appropriate, government will play a coordinating and collaborative role. CSDE released its International Anti-Botnet Guide, and NTIA was pleased to participate in the development of this effort. I was especially encouraged by the core principles of security advanced by the guide: that security is a shared responsibility that relies on teamwork and demands flexible solutions. We are setting a strong example of what we can accomplish through a strong partnership between the government and the private sector. In the coming weeks, we expect to issue an update to our Botnet Road Map. We are pleased to have a lot of progress to share, with more than half of the tasks either in progress or completed, and many others poised to begin in the near future. As long as we continue to take risks and create new technologies, problems like botnets will always exist. That's the nature of progress. But we can take action to increase our resilience, mitigate any damage, and dramatically reduce the threat that these attacks pose. Let's keep working together. [See complete remarks here.](#)

## Broadband News and Updates

### Federal News

- [NTIA Launches Minority Broadband Initiative](#)
- [USDA: Updated list of ReConnect Awardees](#)
- [FCC Votes to Ban Broadband Subsidies to Suspect Tech](#)
- [Federal Register: Federal Communications Commission \(FCC\) Precision Agriculture Task Force Meeting on Dec. 9](#) (PDF)
- [U.S. Department of Labor: Required Elements for Submission of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Plan Modifications under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#) (PDF)
- [Declaration on Promoting Gender Equality, Equity and Parity in the International Telecommunication Union \(ITU\) Radiocommunication Sector](#)
- [House Committee Advances Legislation to Improve Broadband Mapping](#)
- [Bill Makes 25 Mbps/3 Mbps Standard for All Broadband Subsidies](#)
- [House E&C OKs Broadband Bills](#)

### State News

- Arkansas: [Shift to cities in rural-broadband plan dismays lawmakers](#)
- Connecticut: [Connecticut plans 5G connections on commuter line to NYC](#)
- Georgia: [Rural broadband is a problem, and Georgia is mapping it](#)

- Idaho: [Idaho Broadband Group Urges State to Expand Rural Service](#)
- Illinois: [Illinois hires new chief data officer](#)
- Massachusetts: [West County towns move forward in broadband process](#)
- Missouri: [Governor Parson launches inaugural broadband grant program](#)
- Minnesota: [Minnesota Schools Embrace Tech to Foster Digital Equity](#)
- New Hampshire: [Municipal Districts: The Fix for What Ails Rural Internet?](#)
- New Mexico: [New Mexico has 'no formal plan' for broadband expansion](#)
- Ohio: [Rural Businesses in Ohio Face Limited Broadband Access](#)
- Utah: [UTOPIA Fiber Still Growing With High Demand](#)
- Vermont: [Broadband study gets funding](#)
- Virginia: [Virginia boosts funding for internet-connected public safety radio](#)
- West Virginia: [FCC Chairman speaks on broadband access during W.Va. visit](#)
- Wisconsin: [Howard Marklein: Continued focus on rural broadband](#)

### **Public Safety/FirstNet**

- [FirstNet Buildout Nears 70% Completion as Connections Grow](#)
- [California Tribal Groups Meet to Learn More About FirstNet Features](#)
- [Winners Announced in Public Safety Haptics Challenge](#)
- [Direct Mode Enhancements Move Forward in Latest 3GPP Standards](#)
- [Preparation is Key: First Responder Network Authority Enhances Readiness in Missouri](#)
- [Expanded Telehealth Uses and Capabilities on the FirstNet Network](#)
- [Driving Innovation for Disaster Response to Support America's First Responders and Build Resilient Communities](#)

### **Broadband Funding**

- [Appalachian Regional Commission \(ARC\) Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization \(POWER\) Workshops Announced](#)
- [USDA Announces State-Level Investments in Rural Broadband](#)

### **Digital Inclusion**

- [Knight Foundation: The Power of Open Data to Transform and Engage Communities: A Call for Ideas](#)
- [Association of Public and Land Grant Universities \(APLU\): E-Connectivity in Rural America: Public Research Universities Advancing Digital Inclusion \(PDF\)](#)
- [2020 Digital Census Poses Challenge for Rural Communities](#)
- [Philadelphia Announces Digital Equity Grants for Census Work](#)
- [Digital Divide is Shrinking for America's Hispanic Population](#)

### **General News**

- [National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners Set to 'Bridge the Divide' under New Leadership](#)
- [Loon Will Bring Balloon-powered Internet to the Amazon Rainforest](#)
- [Starry Releases Broadband Investment Guide for Cities](#)
- [Aspen Tech Policy Hub Launches Projects on Election Security, Pretrial Risk Assessment, and More](#)
- [Another Farming Broadband Survey](#)
- [NSF: Platforms for Advanced Wireless Research \(PAWR\) Program](#)
- [State Leaders, Experts Sort Through Federal Broadband Bills](#)
- [Tribal Technology Assessment: The State of Internet Service on Tribal Lands \(Research study by ASU\)](#)
- [Broadband Can Alleviate the Health-Care Crisis](#)
- [50 years ago today, the internet was born in Room 3420](#)
- ['Unserved' Rather Than 'Underserved' Are Critical for Broadband Expansion, Comcast's Cohen Urges](#)
- [How to Get More Rural Students Ready for College? Start With Broadband](#)
- [On the Road to Better Broadband Maps?](#)

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## NTIA Events

Please note that BroadbandUSA will not be hosting a webinar in the month of December 2019.

**Jan. 15, 2020**

### BroadbandUSA Practical Broadband Conversations Webinar Series

**Topic:** [The Benefits of Smart Building Technology](#)

**Time:** 2:00 PM Eastern

Smart buildings are quickly becoming the building blocks of smart cities, providing benefits to both the building owners and tenants. They provide greater energy efficiency, improved use of building resources, and increased productivity of the occupants. Developing smart buildings can lead to an exponentially positive impact on the surrounding community. This panel will discuss smart buildings use cases, the foundational technologies that support them, and the benefits reaped.

**Speakers:**

- Benny Lee, Director of SMC Public Wi-Fi, San Mateo County and Councilman, San Leandro, CA
- Limor Schafman, Senior Director, Smart Buildings Program, Telecommunications Industry Association
- Jiri Skopek, Board of Governors Vice-Chair, 2030 Districts Network

**Moderator:**

- Jean Rice, Senior Broadband Analyst, BroadbandUSA

Visit our [Webinar Archives](#) for past presentations, transcripts and audio recordings.

**Feb. 12 – 13, 2020**

[State Broadband Leaders Network \(SBLN\) Summit](#), Washington, D.C. BroadbandUSA Facilitator: Katherine Bates

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## Events of Interest

**Dec. 4, 2019**

[Council of Development Finance Agencies \(CDFA\)-Ice Miller Broadband Financing Bootcamp](#), online.

**Dec. 4 - 6, 2019**

[National Associated of Development Officers \(NADO\) Southwest Region Economic Development Association \(SWREDA\) Conference](#), Santa Fe, Calif. BroadbandUSA Speaker: Justin Fazzari

**Dec. 9, 2019**

[USDA Arkansas Rural Broadband Solutions Workshop](#), Little Rock, Ark. BroadbandUSA Speaker: Karen Perry

**Dec. 12, 2019**

[Alabama HBCU Broadband Convening](#), sponsored by the Alabama Governor's Office of Minority Affairs, Alabama A&M University. NTIA BroadbandUSA Speaker: Francine Alkisswani

**Jan. 22 – 24, 2020**

[United States Conference of Mayors \(USCM\) 88th Winter Meeting](#), Washington, D.C.

**Jan. 23, 2020**

[Next Centuries Cities: Opportunities for Bipartisan Tech Policy 2020](#), Washington, D.C.



**NTIA's BroadbandUSA** program promotes innovation and economic growth by supporting efforts to expand broadband connectivity and digital inclusion across America. In this role, BroadbandUSA serves state and local government, industry and non-profits that want to expand broadband infrastructure and promote digital inclusion.

**Contact Us.** If you are interested in receiving technical assistance, please email [broadbandusa@ntia.gov](mailto:broadbandusa@ntia.gov) or call 202-482-2048. For more information, visit our website at [broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov](http://broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov).

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