

Keynote Speakers for Michigan Broadband Conference Announced

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October 24 event to feature Lt. Governor Calley, Blair Levin, and others

Register for the Conference

Lansing, MI – Connect Michigan's 2013 Michigan Broadband Conference will include state and national leaders such as Lieutenant Governor Brian Calley and Blair Levin, Aspen Institute Fellow and chief architect of the National Broadband Plan. The event is being held on October 24, 2013, at the Kellogg Center, Michigan State University in East Lansing.

"Broadband Internet access is fundamental to the reinvention of Michigan," Lt Gov. Calley said. "The continued, rapid growth of broadband, particularly in rural areas, will be key to the future of our economy. It will help businesses expand their market reach, healthcare providers interact with patients, schools improve education and job training, and government to better serve constituents. More Michiganders than ever have broadband access, and we appreciate Connect Michigan's efforts to close the digital divide."

Connect Michigan, the Library of Michigan, and the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development will bring together nationally recognized broadband and technology experts with local leaders to provide attendees with best practices and insights into leveraging technology for improved community and economic development, education, healthcare, and workforce development.

Along with Calley and Levin, the roster of confirmed and invited speakers includes:

- Michael Finney, President and CEO of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Steve Wildman, Chief Economist for the Federal Communications Commission
- Senator Carl Levin
- John Padalino, USDA Rural Development Rural Utilities Service Administrator
- And many others

The Michigan Broadband Conference provides a platform for Michigan technology leaders to share and promote the benefits of broadband in government, schools, healthcare facilities, libraries, communities, and homes.

Attendees will learn about the cross-collaborative best practices and solutions for broadband planning that can make Michigan more competitive in attracting tourists, new residents, and business activity. The sessions will showcase how innovative technology projects can counteract unemployment and a shrinking population. It will also demonstrate how investments in advanced broadband ecosystems will facilitate faster online connections for Michigan homes and businesses.

"We are excited to continue statewide education and collaboration related to broadband deployment in Michigan, as we have already realized great benefit from federal Broadband Technology Opportunities Program funding and look forward to further leveraging the technical advantages broadband brings in so many areas, from economic development to education, healthcare, and worldwide connectivity," said Sheryl Mase, statewide library services director with the Library of Michigan.

Actionable information and case studies will be provided to empower participants to work with local stakeholders and broadband providers in their communities to expand technology access, adoption, and use. Breakout session topics will include:

- Community Enabled Broadband Expansion
- Increasing Technology Adoption among Small Businesses
- Digital Entrepreneurship
- Digital Job Creation
- Michigan Electronic Library Resources for Business Development
- Gigabit Libraries
- Rural Utilities Service Program
- Rural Broadband Deployment Success Stories
- Technology for Rural Healthcare
- Technology in Education

"Rural Development has invested over \$100 million in rural broadband in the last five years. As those projects continue to build out, it's important we take full advantage of the opportunities broadband provides to businesses, government, education, and healthcare," said Jim Turner, Michigan state director, United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development. "This conference will provide participants the opportunity to share thoughts and experiences so that Michigan takes full advantage of its broadband infrastructure."

Vendor and sponsorship opportunities are still available. Contact: Eric Frederick, executive director at effect (517) 994-8024.

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About Connect Michigan: As the designated entity for broadband mapping and planning in the state of Michigan, Connect Michigan is a public-private partnership between the Michigan Public Service Commission and Connected Nation to work with local governments, businesses, and citizens in the goal of increasing broadband service in the state's underserved areas. For more information about what Connect Michigan is doing to accelerate technology in Michigan's communities, visit www.connectmi.org.

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