



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VERMONT COMMUNITY BROADBAND BOARD ANNOUNCES NEW PARTNERSHIP TO FILL WORKER SHORTAGES WHILE PROVIDING VERMONTERS WITH BETTER-PAYING JOBS AND UNIVERSAL BROADBAND

Montpelier, Vermont – Vermont Community Broadband Board (VCBB) released a Workforce Development Plan Thursday focusing on targeting, recruiting, and training people to work on all aspects of Vermont’s universal build-out of broadband. The VCBB is partnering with Vermont Department of Labor, the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the Communications Union Districts (CUDs), the Vermont Technical College, Vermont State Colleges, and industry leaders to launch education and training programs to address worker shortages, speed up the build-out of universal broadband, and provide high-paying jobs and career paths for Vermonters.

The build-out will require the construction of 8,000 miles of fiber optic network over a five-year period. This will create additional demand for more than 200 fiber optic technicians, as well as interrelated jobs, such as tree-trimmers to prepare rights-of-way and electric utility lineworkers.

“With the tight labor market, we need every able-bodied person to be in the workforce. In each aspect of the program, the VCBB Workforce Development Team will consider how to support a more inclusive and diverse workforce. Workforce programs that build coordination of service

and support delivery will proactively mitigate barriers that limit workforce participation, such as physical, financial, and child-care,” said Christine Hallquist, VCBB Executive Director.

The Workforce Development Plan addresses the need for additional human resources with apprenticeship programs, tuition assistance for job training, job placement, an earn-to-learn program, a centralized resource for sourcing workers, programs targeting the underemployed, and housing support.

“Vermont Technical College is excited to work with the fiber industry in Vermont to provide apprenticeship training for this sector. We are working on developing all the elements of the program with the CUDs, VCBB and construction firms who are doing this work,” said Patricia Moulton, Vermont State Colleges Workforce Division Executive Director.

Some of the Workforce Development Plan’s training and apprenticeship programs are underway, including a well-attended fiber training session. Additional components are in the planning stages and will begin next year.

[Click here for more information on the programs.](#)

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