

Star Communications and the USDA-RA Announce Community Connect Grant Funding



Watch the ceremony here: <https://youtu.be/gIYIK-ySpCE>

Clinton, N.C., Dec 21, 2021 – Star Communications is bringing Fiber-to-the-Home and Business Services to the Coharie Exchange, in Sampson County, North Carolina. The area’s leading telecommunications provider continues to advance communities and extend their fiber footprint — Star Telephone Membership Corp. (dba: Star Communications), a growing telecommunications provider, has just been awarded a \$2.3 million dollar USDA Community Connect Grant to assist Star with deploying fiber and broadband in the northern portion of their service territory. U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development State Director Reginald Speight announced USDA is investing \$5.2 million to build and improve access to high-speed Internet rural infrastructure in North Carolina. The USDA grant will help to bring enhanced fiber-driven products and services including gigabit-Internet speeds to these communities. The construction of the fiber-optic infrastructure will be underway soon with customers being turned

up in phases. The project is scheduled for completion by 2024. “Fiber is no longer considered a desire, but a necessity. It helps advance communications, rural economic development and improves the lives of those that have access. That is why Star and its Board of Directors have intently focused on gaining access to grant funding to improve the lives of our members and customers. Fiber helps in creating new career opportunities and enables citizens to learn, work, and access telemedicine and entertainment from home,” said Jeff Nethercutt, CEO of Star Communications. “We are proud to work with the USDA and other state and federal entities to deliver these forward-thinking services to our area.” Star Telephone Membership Corp will use the \$2.3 million Community Connect Grant to construct approximately 120 miles of infrastructure to build a Fiber-to-the-Premise network. It will impact 1,800 residences and 15 businesses in northern Sampson County. Funds will also be utilized to build a community center where residents can access the Internet free of charge for up to two years. Customers will have access to services including fiber-driven Internet with speeds up to 1 Gbps, managed Ethernet, Cloud Services, Managed Wi-Fi, and multiple voice options. Potential business and residential customers can learn more at www.starcom.net.

About Star Communications:

Star Telephone Membership Corporation (dba Star Communications) is a member owned cooperative based in Clinton, NC. Established in 1959, Star’s service area includes portions of Sampson, Bladen, Cumberland, Columbus, and Duplin County. Star provides services in additional areas through its wholly owned subsidiary StarVision, Inc. For more information on Star Communications’ products and services, contact our business office at 800-706-6538 or 910-564-4194 or visit us on the web at www.starcom.net.

For Immediate Release