REGIONAL FiberConnect

July 17, 2025
Marriott Anchorage

7:15AM	**Registration Opens,** *Sponsored by Millennium*
7:15AM – 8:00AM	*Networking Breakfast with Exhibitors*
8:00AM – 8:05AM	**Welcome & Introduction** Evann Freeman, Vice President, Government and Community Relations, EPB, FBA Board
8:05AM – 8:20AM	**Fiber Broadband: Leave No Community Behind** Gary Bolton, President & CEO, Fiber Broadband Association
8:20AM – 8:25AM	**Platinum Sponsor Welcome & Introductions** Ashley Brown, Senior Director, Field Marketing, Adtran
8:25AM – 8:45AM	**Opening Keynote: Delivering the Best Broadband for Alaska** Thomas Lochner, Director of Broadband, Alaska Broadband Office, Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development
8:45AM – 9:20AM	**A Case in Point: Wired for What's Next – Working with Builders to Deliver Fiber-Ready Homes** Alaska's fiber broadband leaders are collaborating with homebuilders to ensure new homes are ready to support today and tomorrow's rapidly evolving technology needs. Outside plant experts Iwo Olewniczak and Robbie Nash will discuss how working with builders early in the homebuilding process has helped new homes be ready for high-speed fiber from day one. **Moderator:** Ashley Brown, Senior Director, Field Marketing, Adtran **Panelists:** • Iwo Olewniczak, Manager, Outside Plant Engineering, Alaska Communications • Robbie Nash, Vice President, OSP Engineering and Construction, MTA
9:20AM – 9:45AM	**Fireside Chat: Workforce Development in the Frontier State** Melissa Caress, Statewide Training Director, Alaska Joint Electrical Apprenticeship & Training Trust (AJEATT) with Deborah Kish, FBA VP of Research and Workforce Development
9:45AM – 10:30AM	*Networking Break with Exhibitors*
10:30AM – 11:15AM	**Fiber and Fixed Wireless: Creating Connections that Scale** To reach everyone, everywhere across Alaska will require innovative solutions and while FTTH might not be feasible today, fiber plays a critical role if a community must look at other options, such as fixed wireless, to connect homes based on key logistical and demographic factors. This panel will discuss the criteria for evaluating when fiber makes sense as the point of connection and the role in backhauling traffic from Fixed Wireless deployments so that no communities or people are left behind.

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Moderator: John George, Senior Director, Solutions Engineering and Fusion Splicers, Lightera
Panelists:
- Kelly Williams, CEO, OTZ Telephone Cooperative
- Tony Dodge, Chief Network Officer, Alaska Communications
- Alex Eissler, Director of Consumer & Enterprise Products, Alaska Power and Telephone Company

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM **Tribal Broadband: Ensuring Communities Have Capacity to Thrive**
The Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP) is a $3 billion program, from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, to support Tribal governments bringing high-speed Internet to Tribal lands, including telehealth, distance learning, affordability, and digital inclusion initiatives. This panel of Tribal broadband representatives will discuss the unique requirements of building networks on Tribal lands, key factors for strong partnerships, and how each sees fiber broadband impacting their members over the next decade.
Moderator: Claudia Tarbell, Field Marketing for Tribal and Indigenous Communities, Calix
Panelists:
- Gerald Spencer, Senior Manager, Tribal Relations and Business Development, Adtran
- Joe Valandra, CEO and Chairman, Tribal Ready
- Cheri McConnell, Senior Vice President Infrastructure, Kawerak, Inc.
- Keja Whiteman, President and CEO, Nokomis Strategies, Inc.

12:00PM **Lunch Sponsor Remarks**
Donny Henderson, Tribal Business Development Manager, Ciena

12:00PM – 12:45PM **Networking Lunch**, *Sponsored by Graybar/Ciena*
12:45PM – 1:30PM *Networking Dessert with Exhibitors*

1:30PM – 2:10PM **The Community Connection: How Fiber Impacts Economics and Opportunity**
As the fiber broadband industry moves to close the Digital Equity Gap, what does this mean for local stakeholders in terms of economic impact and opportunity? What role does fiber play in improving GDP, creating job opportunities, and new business development? What impact can it have on education, community services and home prices, and does fiber present the best catalyst for growth as local operators decide what technology to leverage with BEAD funding? At the heart of it is, does an option other than fiber equate to a decision to potentially leave a community behind?
Moderator: Ashley Travers, Vice President, Strategic Partnerships, KGPCo
Panelists:
- Michael Burke, CEO, Matanuska Telecom Association
- Megan Webb, Dir Sr, Corporate Communications, GCI

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- Theresa Quiner, MLS, Library Director, Kuskokwim Consortium Library | UAF Kuskokwim Campus, President, Alaska Library Association

2:10PM – 2:30PM **Afternoon Keynote: The Community Centered Connectivity Model - Tribal Broadband Paths to a Shared Destination**
Sharayah Lane (Lummi Nation), Senior Policy Advisor, Indigenous Community Connectivity, Internet Society

2:30PM – 2:40PM *Sip & Stretch Coffee and Snack Break*

2:40PM – 3:20PM **Deployment Challenges and Opportunities: Reaching Further**
The Last Frontier is the largest state, more than twice the size of Texas, with more coastline than the rest of the U.S. combined. It also has 12,000 rivers and 3 million lakes, three glaciers, the nation's highest peak and lowest population density. This varied topography and demographics creates challenges for operators looking to deploy services across the region and state, both in terms of the outside plant conditions and the local city and country requirements network operators will face as each look to expand network footprint and reach homes previously unconnected. This panel will discuss the realities of deploying fiber broadband networks in such a diverse outside plant environment as Alaska offers.
Moderator: Brendan O'Boyle, National Sales Manager- Communications Markets, PLP
Panelists:
- Todd Way, CEO, DFN
- Bo Gresham, Vice President of Strategy, DYCOM
- Joshua Beug, CEO, Copper Valley Telecom

3:20PM – 3:25PM **Closing Remarks**

3:25PM – 4:30PM **Networking Reception in Exhibitors,** sponsored by Netceed

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