



# ICN Insider

Iowa Communications Network  
March/April 2016 Newsletter

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## ICN's Vision:



**BROADBAND**  
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## SYBAC Students Visit Capitol for Strong Broadband Discussions

High school students from across Iowa experienced the opportunity on February 9 to meet with elected officials at the State Capitol to discuss the importance of strong reliable broadband in their daily lives. The 11 student participants are part of the 2015-2016 Statewide Youth Broadband Advisory Council (SYBAC) founded by the ICN.



The SYBAC students were briefed by elected officials on past and current state initiatives relating to technology. Those measures include the 'Connect Every Acre' initiative, a cyber security bill, and a measure to prevent identity theft. State Representative Zach Nunn (R- Polk County), himself a former cyber security analyst with the National Security Administration, offered the students insight into the global challenges to security as technology advances.

In addition to meeting with elected officials at the statehouse, SYBAC students also had a special visitor to their monthly meeting at ICN headquarters. Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds participated in a round table discussion with the students on a range of topics including the new Amazon ECHO product, driverless cars, lack of strong reliable broadband in some schools, and future opportunities for students in Iowa. "In Iowa we lead the way in technology. There's a great future for you in technology here in Iowa," Reynolds said.



*SYBAC students pose for a photo with Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds following monthly SYBAC meeting at ICN*

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## ICN Successfully Powers Strong Broadband to Worldwide Media During Iowa Caucuses

Once again, Iowa became the focus of worldwide media attention on February 1 during the Iowa Caucuses. The Iowa Communications Network (ICN) was there to provide fast, strong, reliable broadband to the various media who converged on the Capitol Complex in Des Moines to cover the event.

During the weeks leading up to the Caucuses, ICN coordinated multiple service requests from the Iowa Department of Administrative Services for temporary services at various locations on the Capitol Complex. The large number of media broadcasting from the state's capitol required a tremendous amount of broadband. Media outlets requested Internet circuits, which were used a variety of ways from streaming video, updating social media, and communicating back to their network offices. ICN provided bandwidth for organizations including NBC, ABC, CNN, and Fox News to name a few.

ICN understands the importance of providing strong broadband with uninterrupted service during the caucuses

when Iowa is in the spotlight as voters head to their caucus location. Ric Lombard, ICN Executive Director explains ICN's

role in providing strong broadband services during the caucus, "ICN worked diligently to ensure Iowans and the world could receive instant caucus news and results from the media that were stationed around the Capitol Complex. Supplying powerful high-speed broadband and plentiful bandwidth is required to effectively communicate in today's digital world."

In addition to ensuring adequate broadband was available on caucuses night, ICN also ensured there were extensions of video circuits for satellite trucks located on the Capitol Complex. This allowed the media to be equipped for live broadcasts in the days leading up to the caucus, and on caucus night when the country turned its attention to Iowa. Typical service requests often

include coordinating connections and preparing facilities for temporary rack mounting and cabling to support the digital transmissions of the media.

**Demonstrating how ICN is BROADBAND STRONG.**



TAC group preparing for the caucuses on the Capitol complex

## Providing New Strong Broadband Service for Fast Customer Experiences

Beginning July 1, 2016, ICN's K-12 education and library users will have the option of subscribing to a new strong service called Minimum Service Level (MSL), which provides up to 100 Mb of synchronous aggregated broadband for \$6/Mb when partnering with an Area Education Agency (AEA). This service offering also includes an Ethernet Circuit port. ICN has made it a priority to create flexible product offerings that provides the ability to acquire bandwidth services at an affordable rate.

There are additional media and technology services that AEAs can provide to Iowa's educational community, which include:

- Offering Internet bandwidth on a consortium aggregated pricing structure.
- Providing Information Technology (IT) and/or media

services, such as: content filtering, software purchases, email service provider, etc.

In January 2015, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adjusted the definition of "advanced broadband" to 25 Mbps download/3 Mbps upload for residential speeds.

This service offering raises the broadband threshold and provides an affordable bandwidth service offering for Iowa's education users. "ICN is choosing to be responsible with our bandwidth, and we have the ability to impact the educational community," said Ric Lombard, ICN Executive Director.

For more information about broadband service contact your ICN account consultant.



## Flexible Cabling Options Now Available Statewide with ICN's TAC Team

Customers outside of the Des Moines area can now benefit from ICN's strong, flexible Technical Assistance Center (TAC) team. ICN's TAC team, with over 60 years of combined experience, can help customers' plan, design, install, and maintain all their LAN and WAN infrastructure needs.

The TAC team has traveled to Spencer and Fort Dodge for customer site surveys to evaluate a building's cabling configuration. Every building's infrastructure is different, and each site evaluation includes reviewing existing pathways for CAT 5 cabling to install services such as wireless access points for Wi-Fi or ICN's new Managed Voice Service (MVS). If a site survey determines that cabling can't be reused or it is below CAT 5 requirements, then ICN's TAC group will estimate what it will take to install new cabling.

The TAC group enjoys working on customer projects that have 'less than perfect installations'. Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS) has worked with ICN's TAC group on multiple projects over the last two years. The most significant project during that time frame was with their Data Center re-cabling project. "The TAC group provided great insight on the best ways to accomplish our goals down to network rack location, cabling baskets, cable types, and even labeling. The finished product is showroom worthy and engineered for practicality and longevity," said IPERS Networking Staff. Once a telecom closet is organized, then it is easier for all parties involved to troubleshoot when needed.



IPERS Telecom Closet Before



IPERS Telecom Closet After

From designing and mounting rack systems to installing cabling to support building services, the dedicated experience and professionalism of ICN's TAC group is now available to all statewide customers. Contact your ICN Account Consultant for more information about available TAC services.

### Listing of TAC Services

- Structure cabling design, installation, and troubleshooting PVC and plenum copper cabling
- Installation and troubleshoot armored and non-armored fiber
- Install, extend, and troubleshoot data circuits
- Design and install rack systems to support telecommunications rooms, main distribution frames, and data centers
- Establish and install horizontal and vertical pathways
- Installation of copper cabling to support building services
  - Elevators
  - Building automation systems
  - Security
  - Area of rescue assistance
  - Point of sale devices (Cash registers)
  - Wall phones
- Installation and replacement of customer provided equipment
  - Voice, Video, Data
  - Wireless access points
- Design, installation, and implementation of overhead and sub floor basket systems

The networking department of the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) interacts with ICN's TAC group on a regular basis for data network cabling and related needs for two data centers. "We rely on their knowledge and professionalism to get the job done right the first time, and on time. We always have been pleased with the quality of the work and the dedication of the people doing the work."

- Steve Harris, OCIO's Networking Team

## FirstNet Issues RFP for the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network

In January, the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) issued its [Request for Proposals \(RFP\)](#) for the deployment of the nationwide public safety broadband network, marking a major step forward in FirstNet's efforts to modernize communications for first responders and other public safety personnel across the U.S.

The release of the RFP follows more than a year of dialogue with public safety and industry on the objectives and scope of the RFP for the FirstNet network.

FirstNet has also conducted a comprehensive consultation and outreach program to engage with the states, territories, federal agencies, tribal governments, and the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) in the RFP development process.

Proposals to the RFP are due April 29, 2016. FirstNet will review and consider all responses submitted and anticipates making an award in the fourth quarter of 2016. For more information about FirstNet visit <http://firstnet.gov>.



## Employee Spotlight Jeannie Patterson

Jeannie Patterson works as a Technical Services Specialist, Sr. within the Engineering and Operations Bureaus for the ICN. She has been with the ICN for 19 years. An interesting new responsibility of hers is working on Costs Recovery efforts for Outside Plant; thousands of dollars each year are involved when nature exposes ICN's fiber, or a contractor cuts it.

She explains that the best part of her job is seeing how the agency grows and changes all the time. "When I started, the engineers had these big white boards outside their cubes and the retired U.S. West guys would draw how things worked. The new hires would grab a different color marker and say 'how 'bout if we do this?' That's gotten the ICN to where we are now, engineers figuring out how we can do this."

Prior to the ICN, her previous employer was the Iowa National Guard. During that interview Jeannie explained that she watched all the MASH reruns, and General Lawson laughed and told her she probably had the qualifications for the job.

Jeannie's family includes her three married children, seven grandchildren, three siblings and tons of cousins. She explains that there is always someone that needs help, an overnight stay, or a birthday cake. If Jeannie could meet one person in history she would want to meet her great grandmother. "I'm fascinated by women who have lived through the great depression or some time in history where they had nothing, but they managed to feed and raise a family, and usually someone else's children. They get them [children] cleaned and scrubbed off and to school or church, and all grew up to be good people who thought they had great childhoods."

**BROADBAND STRONG:** Delivering **FLEXIBLE** broadband and **FAST** experiences to meet the growing broadband needs of education, government, public safety, and healthcare in Iowa.

- STRONG**  
Resilient, Valuable, Secure, and Reliable
- FLEXIBLE**  
Efficient, Dynamic, and Customer Friendly
- FAST**  
Transport, Services, Systems, and Customer Experiences

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## Broadband Matters News

### Rural broadband coverage seen as essential

Dianne Rissman remembers what life was like before she was able to get broadband Internet service at her business in rural Postville, Iowa. "We have old phone lines, and it would take 15 to 20 minutes to load a page. We would just finally give up," said Rissman, co-owner with Caroline Clark of Forest Mills Quilt Shop.

### Iowa Professor Creates 'CyberPower' to Protect Grid

After witnessing a cyberattack on the Ukrainian power grids, an Iowa State University professor took it upon himself to create a program to better protect the state's infrastructure.

### Iowa fights snow with data

Most residents of the Mid-Atlantic states, now digging out from the recent record-setting snowstorm, probably don't know how soon their streets will be clear. If they lived in Iowa, however, they could simply go to the state's Track a Plow website to see in near real time where snow plows are and in what direction they're heading.

# BROADBAND MATTERS

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