

Vistra Donation Provides Broadband Internet to Rural Ohio Students, Bridging the Digital Divide

NEWS RELEASE BY VISTRA

Northampton, MA | July 01, 2021 11:36 AM Eastern Daylight Time

Appalachian Ohio's communities have long faced a digital divide. Compared to other parts of the state, Appalachian Ohio experiences slower internet connections, and fewer homes have broadband access. This divide became even more apparent when the COVID-19 pandemic forced students to learn online.

"For too many students, the playing field isn't level when it comes to high-speed internet access – something we now know to be a necessity, not a luxury, for learning at the highest level," said Brad Watson, senior director of community affairs for Vistra.

Through a partnership with the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio, Vistra is working to bridge the digital divide.

Vistra awarded the Foundation a \$75,000 grant to purchase broadband hotspots. The devices are easily accessible and free at community libraries near three of Vistra's Ohio power plants in Clermont, Lawrence, and Washington counties.

"I don't think the affordability aspect of what Vistra has done can be overstated," said Cara Dingus Brook, president and CEO of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio.

"Providing these hotspots and entrusting them to local libraries was a brilliant solution to a problem that we were really struggling with."

Helping Power Internet Connectivity:

Be sure to **watch our latest Vistra video** featuring a behind-the-scenes look at how these hotspots are boosting online learning opportunities for students in rural Ohio, and **learn more about Vistra's work to bridge the digital divide with the Foundation of Appalachian Ohio.**

Also, find out more about **Vistra's commitment to support technology access and online education** through the company's partnership and \$230,000 donation to Comp-U-Dopt in 2020. In total, Vistra provided more than 2,000 refurbished, free-of-charge laptops for students and families in underserved communities as part of the company's commitment to support critical needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

View additional multimedia and more ESG storytelling from Vistra on 3blmedia.com