



## PRESS RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Dustin Schlaefli at

Nex-Tech Inc.

785-625-7070 Fax: 785-567-4401

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Nex-Tech Wins Recognition as Top Business of the Year by Governor Brownback

**HAYS, KAN 6-20-12-** Gov. Sam Brownback recognized Nex-Tech of Lenora with the Governor's Award of Excellence at the annual Kansas Cavalry Encampment at the Kansas State University Alumni Center in Manhattan on June 12, 2012.

This award is the state's highest achievement by a business and is the culmination of Business Appreciation Month, the Department's annual statewide tribute to Kansas businesses for their contributions to the state. The event is sponsored by the Kansas Department of Commerce and the Kansas Cavalry, a volunteer group of business leaders who promote the state as a desirable business location.

"Nex-Tech is well deserving of its recognition," Brownback said.

"Nex-Tech is a leader and innovator, in addition to being an active partner in its communities. I look forward to Nex-Tech's continued growth and success, as we work to make Kansas the best place to start and grow a business."

Nex-Tech was specifically recognized for its contributions to the State of Kansas including the following: Nex-Tech/Rural Telephone provides local and long distance telephone services, video and Internet service to 76 communities and surrounding rural areas in central and western Kansas. Additional services include a wide variety of voice, wireless, video and data solutions specializing in business systems, local and wide area networks, security systems and video production. As the CEO/General Manager, Larry Sevier leads the company's 378 employees.

"This is the top award a business can achieve and we owe that to our employees," Sevier said.

"We have a tremendous employee base and this award really shows how great they are."

Sevier explained that major factors in earning the recognition have been job creation and infrastructure improvements the company is doing.

2418 Vine Street  
Hays, KS 67601

phone: 785.625.7070

toll free: 877.625.7872

fax: 785.625.4479



The company was awarded \$101 million in funding to deploy broadband throughout its territory. This project will bring high-speed broadband to 23,000 households and businesses, as well as 335 anchor institutions in 21 communities and 26 rural areas covering 11 counties in northwest Kansas. After this project is complete, more than 39,000 households and businesses in 76 communities in 17 counties will have high-speed broadband within the more than 9,300 square miles Nex-Tech's territory covers.

Employees enjoy a wide variety of training opportunities and programs. Nex-Tech Training Services is certified as a proprietary school through the Kansas Board of Regents and is registered as a Kansas Service Provider. Through a partnership with Fort Hays State University, employees and customers can attend classes in Microsoft Office applications and earn college or continuing education credit.

The company created a Youth Services/Community Development Coordinator position in 2011 to administer the company's youth programs (internships, educational school presentations, career days and other events), and to serve as a liaison to businesses, schools and communities. The company offers a variety of youth-centered programs that feature keeping children safe from online predators, tips to stop cyberbullying and the dangers of texting while driving.

Other finalists for the Governor's Award of Excellence were Carter Automotive Warehouse (Coffeyville); Custom Foods, Inc. (DeSoto); Gove County Medical Center (Quinter); Midland Marketing (Hays); and NetStandard, Inc. (Kansas City, Kan.).

"I want to congratulate all the companies recognized during Business Appreciation Month," said Kansas Commerce Secretary Pat George. "There are many outstanding companies doing some great things in business and in their communities. We are fortunate that these businesses call Kansas home."

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www.nex-tech.com



*Pictured: Gov. Sam Brownback; Nex-Tech CEO/General Manager, Larry E. Sevier; and Nex-Tech Chief Operating Officer, Jeff Wick*