

## **ANTIETAM BROADBAND AND ONTRACK JOIN FORCES**

*Partnership Focuses on Educating the Workforce of the Future*

**July 23 - Hagerstown, MD.** Antietam Broadband and OnTrack announced today a multi-year partnership to support the mission of OnTrack whose focus is to build an educated workforce. Antietam will donate \$150,000 in cash and in-kind over the next three years. Antietam Broadband will deploy a full slate of marketing, social media and video support to promote the work of OnTrack in Washington County. The majority of the donation will be used to support the hiring of an Executive Director.

“As a growing technology company in Washington County we’re interested in supporting organizations that prepare our future employees, said Brian Lynch, President of Antietam Broadband. “To be competitive Washington County must embrace and support initiatives that will develop the skills for tomorrow’s workforce”, said Lynch. “We recognize a growing national skills gap as technology impacts our economy, and the need for the business community to take an active role in developing our future workforce.”

OnTrack is a coalition of 37 community partners focused on creating an educational movement and a network of support from cradle to career. The goal is to empower citizens to acquire the educational or vocational training necessary for lifelong success.

“Antietam Broadband is not only a valued partner, but they have shown true leadership with their Challenge Grant. Not only does this grant support our need for an Executive Director, but it helps us to enhance and expand the collective impact of our coalition on college and career readiness”, said Jim Kercheval, Acting Executive Director of OnTrack.

National research by the Lumina Foundation supports the need for OnTrack:

- Within the next 10 years 60% of citizens will need a two-year college degree or higher or an advanced vocational certificate

- Only about 32.7% of Washington County residents have this education level
  - 42.5% in the US; 48.9% in Maryland

OnTrack's role is to:

- Facilitate a community vision and agenda for college and career readiness.
- Define and articulate the educational and vocational challenges facing the community.
- Establish shared measurements and local benchmarks for college and career readiness and advance evidence-based decision making among stakeholder organizations.
- Encourage and facilitate collaborations and strategic action designed to address the educational and vocational challenges.

An example of OnTrack's activities in Washington County was the recent 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Exploration Day at Hagerstown Community College on June 6<sup>th</sup>. This event introduced more than 1500 students to over 50 local business professionals from a variety of disciplines and industries. The goal of the event was to inspire students to pursue local careers.

About OnTrack: <http://ontrackwc.org>

OnTrack serves as an umbrella organization facilitating collaboration among 37 stakeholder organizations in an effort to improve workforce development and raise the educational attainment levels of the citizens of Washington County. OnTrack is modeled after the collective impact network StriveTogether, based in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Washington County Chamber of Commerce serves as OnTrack's host agency, and provides office space, meeting space, and administrative support. OnTrack aligns public, private and non-profit resources and opportunities from cradle to career empowering individuals to maximize their potential through educational and vocational endeavors. Their umbrella structure is a bottom-up approach designed to keep stakeholders engaged and focused on a shared vision for educational improvement and workforce development.

About Antietam Broadband: <http://antietambroadband.com>

Antietam Broadband was founded in 1966 and was purchased by Schurz Communications, Inc. in 1968. It is a full-service telecommunications company offering a complete range of residential and business-class technology solutions including digital television, high-speed Internet and digital phone services in Washington County, MD. Antietam introduced Flight Gigabit Internet service in 2016 and made Hagerstown the 75<sup>th</sup> gigabit city in the USA. The company is focused on enhancing the lives of its customers by providing the latest telecommunication services and maintaining the highest standards of excellence in customer care and world class technical service.