



New Study Finds that Access to High Speed Broadband Can Reduce Unemployment Rates

Orlando, Florida (June 3, 2019) — Researchers from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and Oklahoma State University recently released a new study that investigates the impact high speed broadband has on the workforce. The researchers Lobo, Alam and Whitacre found that high speed broadband reduced unemployment rates in cities throughout Tennessee, especially in rural communities.

Here are some highlights from the report:

- In studying 95 counties in Tennessee from 2011 to 2016, they found that access to high speed broadband can significantly reduce unemployment rates, especially in rural communities.
- Counties with access to high speed broadband have an approximately 0.26 percentage point lower rate of unemployment compared to low speed counties.
- Early adoption of high speed broadband could reduce unemployment rates by an average of 0.16 percentage points per year.
- Counties lacking high speed broadband have smaller populations and population density, lower household income, and a slightly smaller proportion of people with at least a high school diploma.

“Having access to high speed broadband, which is propelled by fiber deployment, is the great equalizer for many communities throughout America, especially those in rural areas,” said Lisa R. Youngers, President and CEO of the Fiber Broadband Association. “This study shows that high speed broadband can jumpstart local economies by lowering unemployment rates and creating new opportunities.”

Katie Espeseth, vice president of New Products at EPB Fiber Optics, added, “We are proud to see that this study highlights some of the great work we have done to establish Chattanooga as America’s first Gig City. Since 2009, we have connected more than 100,000 customers to high speed broadband powered by a community-wide fiber optic network that has helped grow Chattanooga’s economy and support our thriving entrepreneurial culture.”

This study informs national research on broadband effects funded in part by the Fiber Broadband Association.

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About the Fiber Broadband Association

The Fiber Broadband Association is the largest and only trade association in the Americas dedicated to the pursuit of all fiber optic network infrastructure to the home, to the business and to everywhere. The Fiber Broadband Association helps providers make informed decisions about how, where, and why to build better broadband networks with fiber optics while working with its members to lead the organization, collaborate with industry allies and propel fiber optic deployment forward. Since 2001, these companies, organizations and people have worked with our communities and consumers in mind to build a better broadband future here and around the world. Learn more at www.fiberbroadband.org.

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