



## Rural Deshler Project

### Attachment J: Digital Inclusion Plan

Great Plains Communications (GPC) realizes the need to continue the tradition of giving back to the communities we serve and the need to exude and nurture the strong company culture that has been built over the past century. We also understand that one of the barriers to quality broadband service is affordability. Therefore, the company continues our ongoing traditions of sponsoring our communities and having employees living, working and giving back to the areas they serve, and to participating in and promoting programs to provide more affordable services to lower-income households. These efforts build long-term relationships with our customers and embrace the company's multi-generational tradition of giving back to the communities we serve.

GPC's Digital Inclusion Plan includes the following:

- 1. Federal Communication Commission Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).** Since the program's inception, GPC has participated in the ACP, which helps ensure that qualifying households can afford the broadband services they need for work, school, healthcare and an improved quality of life. The ACP provides a discount of up to \$30 per month for Internet service to eligible households and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying tribal lands. Great Plains will actively promote the ACP to customers whose internet services are upgraded under the Broadband Bridge Act funding.
- 2. Nebraska Public Service Commission Low Income Program.** In 2020 we participated in the Nebraska Public Service Commission's low-income program. During the initial COVID crisis in 2020, GPC offered free or reduced service to low-income customers and offered free speed upgrades and free installation to numerous customers who were impacted by the crisis. Great Plains continues to participate in Nebraska's Lifeline program and will actively promote Lifeline discounts to Broadband Bridge Act-served customers.
- 3. Commitment to Schools.** GPC believes in the power of education. Therefore, we focus on helping students in the communities we serve attend college by offering over \$35K in scholarships each year. We also provide over \$25,000 in annual grants.

4. **Volunteerism.** With both integrity and community as core values, GPC believes in giving back. That is why over half of our 350-plus employees live and work in the communities they serve. On top of this they actively take part in community causes, donating thousands of hours as firefighters, paramedics, mentors, board members, scout or church leaders and to other community-based organizations.
5. **Community Engagement and Local Economic Development.** To ensure we were working more effectively in the area of Economic Development, a new internal Economic Development committee was formed at the beginning of 2019. This group helps to stay on top of initiatives within current service areas as well as areas where the company is looking to expand and prioritizes both monetary contributions and time allotment accordingly.
6. **Culture.** The internal culture of GPC is very collaborative and focused on the core values of accountability, community, integrity, quality, service and teamwork. Employees strive to work together providing a superior customer experience and making a difference in the communities and to the customers served. We pride ourselves on making each other better and living up to our motto: High Performing Network, High Performing People.