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For Immediate Release
July 9, 2020

How's Your Connection: San Augustine County Launches New Effort to Expand High-Speed Internet Access

San Augustine County, TX (July 9, 2020) – The San Augustine County Broadband Committee, in partnership with Connected Nation Texas (CN Texas), this morning launched a local [Connected Community Engagement Program](#).

This program will help identify the challenges and opportunities for connecting more families, businesses, farmers, schools, libraries, and other community organizations to better access broadband (high-speed internet). As part of that effort, the committee members are asking everyone to share details about their internet access by filling out this 10-minute survey: <https://www.myconnectedcommunity.org/san-augustine-county/>.

“All of us in San Augustine County have at some point experienced the struggles of having too little or no internet access at home—especially during recent COVID-19 shutdowns,” said San Augustine Mayor Leroy Hughes. “Those impacted include local children who can only access their online classrooms via donated hotspots, small business owners who can’t access a virtual marketplace, and employees who must have internet access to keep their jobs. Lack of general bandwidth foils any attempt to attract hi-tech industry to the area. It affects all of us in both small and large ways. That’s why it’s so important that we get as much input in these surveys as possible so we can truly identify the places that have no internet access and those that need to have improved access.”

With funding from the T.L.L. Temple Foundation through the Texas Rural Funders, CN Texas is identifying 23 communities across the state to take part in the Connected program. San Augustine County is the eighth community selected.

The community engagement program collects data from local stakeholders and works directly with providers to identify opportunities and challenges for expanding access to broadband—developing a county-specific Technology Action Plan. The Connected program has developed more than 350 of these plans across the United States.

“This is an opportunity for San Augustine County residents and businesses to leverage CN Texas’ experience in other communities to improve high-speed internet across our area,” said Wynn Rosser, President and Chief Executive Officer of the T.L.L. Temple Foundation. “If we are able to develop a well-informed Technology Action Plan then we will be better equipped to expand internet access to more people, businesses, and organizations across the county. That means we can make it possible for our

communities to connect to the resources and opportunities that impact everything from education to the economy. The Jasper Connected Community engagement is part of the foundation's larger commitment to support the development of high-speed internet across the Deep East Texas Council of Governments (DETCOG) region."

San Augustine County is part of a statewide effort to connect all communities to broadband—especially in rural areas that have been unserved or underserved for far too long.

"Earlier this year, just a month before the pandemic, we launched updated coverage maps that showed where broadband access was strong and where it was lacking across the state," said Jennifer Harris, State Program Director, CN Texas. "We have asked the public to review these maps and let us know where we need to make improvements and adjustments so we can provide a better picture of the need and the opportunity for internet expansion across Texas—including in San Augustine County."

You can find your county map and review its updated information by heading to <https://connectednation.org/texas/mapping-analysis/> and provide feedback at <https://connectednation.org/texas/feedback>. You can also find an interactive map at <https://connectednation.org/texas/interactivemap>.

Head here for a printable fact sheet on the San Augustine County Broadband Committee's work: <https://connectednation.org/texas/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2020/06/San-Augustine-County-Broadband-Fact-Sheet-draft.pdf>

To learn more about CN Texas, email Jennifer Harris at jharris@connectednation.org or visit the CN Texas website at <https://www.connectednation.org/texas>. To learn more about the Connected Program head to <https://connectednation.org/connect-my-community/>.

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About Connected Nation Texas: CN Texas is a local division of the national nonprofit Connected Nation. Our mission is to improve lives by providing innovative solutions that expand access to and increase the adoption and use of broadband (high-speed internet) and its related technologies for all people. Everyone belongs in a Connected Nation.

Connected Nation works with consumers, local community leaders, states, technology providers, and foundations to develop and implement technology expansion programs with core competencies centered on a mission to improve digital inclusion for people and places previously underserved or overlooked. For more information, please visit: connectednation.org and follow Connected Nation on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About the Texas Rural Funders: The mission of the Texas Rural Funders (TRF) is to partner with rural Texans to achieve their vision of prosperity and wellbeing. The group's strategies recognize and are informed by rural expertise and assets. The TRFC leverages local, philanthropic, state and federal resources to collaborate on projects, support local capacity and leadership, share research, convene stakeholders and engage in advocacy. More information can be found on the TRF webpage at: <https://www.edtx.org/get-involved/texas-rural-funders-collaborative>.

About T.L.L. Temple Foundation: The T.L.L. Temple Foundation works alongside rural communities to build a thriving East Texas and to alleviate poverty, creating access and

opportunities for all. Since its founding in 1962 by Mrs. Georgie Temple Munz, the T.L.L. Temple Foundation has invested approximately \$500 million, primarily to strengthen communities in Deep East Texas. For more information about the foundation, visit www.tlltemple.foundation.



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