Atlanta, TX Seeks Volunteers for Local Technology Planning Effort

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 30, 2012

Contact: Jeremy Thacker, (615) 521-5905 or jthacker@connectednation.org

Committee members needed to be part of 'Connected' community engagement program

Atlanta, TX – Atlanta community leaders are enrolling in an innovative program that seeks to boost the local economy and quality of life for residents though increased access, adoption, and use of broadband, but the program needs more volunteers. Atlanta Public Library Director Jackie Icenhower has stepped forward to be one of the community champions on the project.

Staff from Connected Texas, the statewide nonprofit promoting broadband expansion, will be leading a local volunteer committee through the steps of the new "Connected" community certification program that offers a comprehensive and localized way for communities to bridge the digital divide impacting many communities.

The Atlanta Connected Community Leadership Team has planned its first meeting for:

> **Tuesday, May 8, 2012**
> **10:30 A.M.**
> **Atlanta Public Library**

Anyone interested in contributing is invited to come and begin building a plan to ensure that every home, school, organization, and business in the county has access to broadband. The committee is part of the Texas plan to deliver broadband access to every part of the state. Ultimately, the goal of the Connected community certification program is to increase the number of high-tech companies and jobs in Texas and to improve the quality of life for residents.

The team will assess the current state of technology in the county, determine what improvements are needed, and devise a plan for achieving those goals.

Community members interested in the project are urged to join. Volunteers are needed to represent the following areas:

- Business and industry
- Healthcare
- Libraries
- K-12 education
- Higher education
- Community-based organizations
- Government
- Agriculture
- Tourism, recreation and parks
- Tribal representatives

The use of broadband technology is already enhancing the lives and businesses of citizens all across the state. In fact, Texas businesses with broadband report an average of $150,000 higher annual revenue than businesses without. Many companies cite the availability of broadband as essential to starting or expanding their operations. The Internet also allows small businesses, even those based in remote locations, to compete worldwide.

Broadband also promises to boost the economy and quality of life in Texas. For example, doctors can remotely monitor patients with chronic illnesses, working parents can complete their college degrees by attending classes online, and tourists can make online reservations.

Atlanta residents interested in getting involved should contact Icenhower at (903) 796-2112. Or, please contact Connected Texas at info@connectedtx.org or program coordinator LaTanya Tatum at (512) 461-4159.

# # #

About Connected Texas: Connected Texas is a subsidiary of Connected Nation and operates as a non-profit in the state of Texas. The Texas Department of Agriculture is leading the initiative to increase broadband Internet access, adoption, and use across the state. Connected Texas was commissioned by the state to work with all Texas broadband providers to create detailed maps of broadband coverage and development of a statewide plan for the deployment and adoption of broadband. For more information visit: http://www.connectedtx.org.

Also follow **Connected Texas** on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.

The **Texas Broadband Summit** is June 5, 2012 in Dallas. **Register today**!