



MONTGOMERY COUNTY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public and private partners to bring high-speed Wi-Fi to five housing communities



DAYTON, Ohio (Oct. 22, 2020) – Montgomery County, Greater Dayton Premier Management, CareSource, Cincinnati Bell Inc. and multiple Dayton-based organizations are partnering to bring high-speed Wi-Fi to more than 1,000 residents living in five housing communities.

The Dayton-Montgomery County Digital Equity Initiative is being funded primarily through an \$2 million Montgomery County CARES Act grant. The project is expected to be completed in December 2020 and will deliver internet connectivity and hardware that is critical for citizens to access jobs, educational opportunities and healthcare resources. The program will also deploy nearly 900 Chromebook devices to residents at the following five housing communities: Desoto Bass, Park Manor, Wilkinson Plaza, Westdale Terrace, and Fitch and Hawthorn.

“Montgomery County is working to address inequality and create more upward mobility for our citizens in historically underserved communities,” said County Commissioner Debbie Lieberman. “We know that many citizens lack access to computers and technology, and we are committed to closing the digital divide so that all of our children and families have access to opportunities.”

“While computers and the Internet have generated dramatic improvements in our lives, there is a clear and distinct digital divide that further entrenches structural inequities. This project marks a turning point for our community,” said Jennifer Heapy, Chief Executive Officer of Greater Dayton Premier Management. “By working collaboratively to increase access to computers and quality internet connections, we will be moving our residents closer to economic, educational and health care equality.”

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CareSource committed \$400,000 to continue to address the digital divide in underserved communities in Montgomery County and to support the long-term sustainability of the county's Cares Act investment.

“At CareSource, we see firsthand through our members how the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for digital equity,” said Dan McCabe, Chief Administrative Officer at CareSource and the CEO of the CareSource Foundation. “This amazing partnership will provide opportunities for more than 1,000 individuals to go to school, work from home, access telehealth services and search for employment—and CareSource is proud to invest in the sustainability of this project to ensure those opportunities continue into the future for years to come.”

In addition, the initiative includes fiber upgrades at the Boys & Girls Club of Dayton (BGCD), where Cincinnati Bell, Professional Cabling Solutions (PCS), and Tyco Cloud Services are contributing a firewall, Wi-Fi access points, monthly service, access control and state-of-the-art security cameras.

In the future, the Dayton-Montgomery County Digital Equity Initiative plans to build sustainable and long-term solutions with the help of local stakeholders including: Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority, City of Dayton, Dayton Public Schools, Dayton Development Coalition, Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce, Dayton Power & Light Company, CityWide, Techknowvate, Montgomery County Educational Service Center, Dayton Children's Hospital, Five Rivers Health Centers and Technology First.

Cincinnati Bell has invested more than \$1 billion into building a fiber network across Greater Cincinnati since 2010. Cincinnati Bell also has a growing presence in Dayton and the surrounding area, where recent projects include providing a fiber-based Smart City solution in the Oregon District and City of Fairborn; public Wi-Fi at Levitt Pavilion Dayton; and public Wi-Fi at UD Arena.

Tom Simpson, Chief Operating Officer of Cincinnati Bell Inc., said the Dayton-Montgomery County Digital Equity Initiative aligns with Cincinnati Bell's commitment to increasing digital equity in the markets it serves.

“Digital Equity ultimately comes down to providing universal access and opportunity through connectivity, regardless of one's socioeconomic status,” said Simpson. “Education, jobs, and healthcare are the great equalizers in our society. As a result of the Dayton-Montgomery County Digital Equity Initiative, more of our friends and neighbors will have access to educational tools, job opportunities, and health-care resources.”

Techknowvate will help the County develop a multi-faceted digital inclusion and engagement strategy, providing insights and recommendations focused on improving the County's technology and broadband infrastructure.

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About Montgomery County

Montgomery County, Ohio serves approximately 525,000 citizens in 31 jurisdictions in southwest Ohio. The County employs more than 4,200 public servants focused on innovation, inclusion, collaboration, stewardship, and professionalism. We create value by investing in people, the economy, and services for all to lead safe, healthy, and productive lives.

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