

CLINTON COUNTY, MISSOURI

“Finding out is the point of the experiment, and it feels great to be actively working together to find some solutions to the desperate pleas from our county’s friends and neighbors who are at a disadvantage by not having reliable high-speed broadband service at home.”

- **Christel Gollnick**, Maximize NWMO Navigation Team Member



Partnerships between university and community organizations increased research opportunities and broadband adoption in rural Turney, Missouri.

Large Internet Service Providers (ISPs) avoided Turney, Missouri (in Clinton County) when building connectivity infrastructure around neighboring Kansas City, leaving the local rural population without critical broadband coverage. In a close collaborative effort, the Missouri University of Science and Technology, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, United Fiber, Maximize NWMO, and the University of Missouri Extension responded by successfully connecting local households and a church as part of Project OVERCOME. Building off an existing rural electric cooperative’s fiber network, the team installed a millimeter wave (mmWave) connection to a grain elevator, the tallest nearby structure, enabling wireless LTE with Ubiquiti gear and future Citizens Broadband Radio Service (CBRS) connectivity to cover the town.

The Turney project immediately impacted residents, who reported quality-of-life improvements such as being able to use multiple Internet-connected devices at a time. Residents cited better experiences in employment, education, and healthcare. One small e-commerce business owner said they were able to “post more and stay in contact with customers more efficiently.” Another resident reported that their daughter, a college student who is enrolled in online courses, “no longer has issues getting assignments submitted due to poor service.” Other residents found that newly enabled telehealth visits saved gas money and the cost of taking off time during work.

CLINTON COUNTY, MISSOURI



Fun and engaging community events - like ice cream parties - drove interest and participation in new free Internet programs.



Fixed wireless can offer new fiber-like speeds for hard-to-reach communities.

Once connected, Clinton County residents also engaged in enhanced digital literacy training. A University of Missouri journalism professor led a series of media literacy workshops, including one at a community meeting and two in high school classes, which provided responsible browsing and sharing strategies in a complex information culture. One of the workshop participants reflected that "it was a lot of good information on how to be ethical users of the Internet and digital media allies for each other by fact-checking before sharing emotional news that might not be real."



GRANTEE AND PARTNERS

Missouri University of Science and Technology, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, United Fiber, Maximize Northwest Missouri (NWMO), and University of Missouri Extension