

## Mission and Objectives

The Broadband Alliance is an organization that develops education and advocacy programs to make affordable internet broadband available. While we believe that everyone globally should have high speed internet access, our focus initially is on the United States and more specifically American agriculture.

We see our mission as awareness, education and advocacy. Nothing will happen until people are aware that there is an issue. We want to carry the data from the August 2007 USDA report on Farm Computer Usage and Ownership that says 28% of our 2,000,000 U.S. farms have a high-speed internet connection. Education is such a critical part of this process. We don't want to be building a national infrastructure by giving a million people a brick and saying build a house. We see the need for some serious discussions on public ownership, net neutrality, and a new definition of high-speed. Currently the Federal Communications defines "high-speed" as 200kbps (kilo-bits per second) in at least one direction. This is about 1/7th the speed of DSL. This is a standard that hasn't been updated since 1998. Do you remember what the internet looked like in 1998? The 'at least one direction' is also an educational issue. The old internet was pretty much uni-directional in terms of traffic. You sent a small request and you got a page full of information. The power of peer-to-peer will never be realized by this definition. In its purest form education involves learning and thinking. We plan to do a lot of listening and thinking about this problem and to engage the best minds we can find. We see advocacy as telling the story to those in a position to change things. We will represent those who have been pushed aside and ignored. The Broadband Alliance invites all interested groups in developing educational, advocacy and policy strategies that favor cost effective broadband deployment in rural America. We seek to find ways to serve the needs of underserved communities. We encourage participation from all stakeholders to connect rural areas. Collective efforts of communities, industry, technology and government are key to dismantling barriers to competitive broadband availability. What does the Broadband Alliance hope to accomplish? The Broadband Alliance believes in open access, competition and innovation in the technology marketplace, and is working to promote those goals at a state and federal level. Through our diverse membership, we hope to become a visible force in promoting policies that encourage the rapid deployment of broadband and infrastructure facilities -- closing the "digital divide" and increase rural America's presence in the global economy. How will you go about this? It is important to State and Federal legislature and regulatory bodies to have an organization whose only agenda is proliferation of high speed internet connectivity. We expect to be a friend to government, business and the consumer by incubating intelligent solutions. We will encourage rural adoption of broadband but not ignore the issues of broadband to the nation as a whole. We also choose to provide a neutral forum for collaboration for organizations across the broadband value-chain to discuss and resolve the issues related to the development and exploitation of broadband that affect them all. We will focus on strategic and tactical challenges that affect the whole broadband value chain, with the ultimate aim of helping to create a strong and competitive global knowledge economy.