

News Release

Beyond Broadband: Brightspeed Invests \$580K+ in STEM and Esports Initiatives, Giving Biggest Boost to North Carolina Schools

Company's investment in home state goes well beyond connecting 1.1M North Carolina homes and businesses to reliable, high-speed internet

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — December 16, 2025 — Brightspeed, the nation's third-largest fiber builder and provider of [the country's fastest internet service](#), as determined by HighSpeedInternet.com's Annual Service Provider Review 2025 announced its more than \$580,000 investment in youth technology and esports initiatives benefitting numerous schools and programs across North Carolina.

"Investing in technology education and esports is a natural extension of our commitment to North Carolina," said Sabrina Anderson, Brightspeed local marketing manager. "As we build a world-class fiber network across our home state, we're equally focused on expanding opportunities for the students who will power our communities tomorrow. These initiatives give young people hands-on access to the tools, skills and experiences that prepare them for the digital future."

Brightspeed's technology and esports initiative funding includes:

- a \$350,000 sponsorship of the Coca Cola All Stars Golden Ticket contest, Formula STEM Esports Cup and the Players League Madden NFL tournament hosted in Charlotte, North Carolina,
- more than \$200,000 as primary sponsor of two Bright Future Tech Lab contests that have awarded the full build out of technology labs to Triton High School in Erwin, North Carolina and most recently to Orange High School in Hillsborough, North Carolina,
- \$15,000 in support of Wesleyan University to fund scholarships, equipment and esports program travel,
- a \$10,000 grant to support Rocky Mount High School Gryphon Elite esports team and
- sponsorship of the Wake Forest Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources (PRCR) Department's four-part esports tournament called Battle in the Forest.

"This scholarship will help ease the financial burden my parents carry in supporting my academic journey," said Shafiq Nuijts, Wesleyan University student and recipient of Brightspeed funded scholarship. "It will also allow me to focus more deeply on my education and my internship this upcoming summer. As an international student, my experience has always involved balancing the challenges of maintaining my F-1 status, keeping a high GPA and reassuring my parents that their investment in me is being put to meaningful use. This scholarship affirms that commitment and motivates me to continue striving for excellence."

Brightspeed is headquartered in North Carolina where it is currently building a state-of-the-art multi-gig speed fiber network that will reach more than 1.1 million homes and businesses — its largest fiber build across the company's 20-state footprint. So far, the company has reached nearly 600,000 locations. Brightspeed delivers the fastest and most responsive speeds in Dunn, Henderson, Roanoke Rapids,¹ the most responsive speeds in Elizabeth City and Rocky Mount,² and the fastest speeds in Washington.¹

In North Carolina, Brightspeed is the proud recipient of more than \$244 million in broadband grants awarded by the N.C. Department of Information Technology's (NCDIT) Division of Broadband and Digital Equity under the state's Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) and Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) programs, as well as

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nearly \$91 million in Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) grant funding.³ These grants will enable Brightspeed to connect nearly 122,000 North Carolina households and businesses to its blazing fast network.

“These grants represent more than funding; they represent trust,” said Steve Brewer, Brightspeed director of government affairs. “We take seriously the responsibility the state has placed in Brightspeed to expand access, accelerate growth and ensure more North Carolina households have a fair shot at world-class connectivity. Our team is proud to work hand-in-hand with state partners to deliver on that promise and to continue to invest in the communities we serve beyond connectivity to broadband.”

¹Based on analysis by Ookla® of Speedtest Intelligence® data for upload/download speeds and latency in Dunn, CBSA-25780 Henderson, CBSA-40260 Roanoke Rapids, and Washington for Q1 –Q2 2025 results.

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³Provisionally awarded pending approval by NTIA

About Brightspeed

Headquartered in Charlotte, N.C. and with assets and associated operations in 20 states, Brightspeed provides broadband and telecommunications services through a network platform capable of serving more than 7.3 million homes and businesses. Our nearly 4,000 employees are committed to building a future where more communities benefit from a more connected life, deploying a state-of-the-art fiber network and a customer experience that makes being connected as simple as it should be. For more information, please visit www.brightspeed.com.

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