

## News Release

# Brightspeed Grant Fuels Growth of NC Wesleyan Esports Program: One Year Later

*University's esports team reflects on a year of impact and new opportunities ahead of North Carolina STEM Education Month*

**ROCKY MOUNT, N.C. — March 23, 2026 —** As North Carolina STEM Education Month shines a spotlight on innovation and education this April, NC Wesleyan University is celebrating a milestone for its growing collegiate Esports program. One year after receiving a transformative grant from [Brightspeed](#), the nation's third-largest fiber broadband builder, the university's Bishop Gaming Association (BGA) is seeing measurable impact, from upgraded facilities and streaming technology to expanded opportunities for student competition and career exploration in STEM-related fields.

"Not only did this grant from Brightspeed allow us to level up our resources and facilities, benefitting our individual players, it gave us what we needed to put the university's STEM programs on the map," said Chantoni Grant, director of Esports at NC Wesleyan University. "Future students now have access to professional-level equipment and experiences that mirror the real esports and digital media industries. That exposure is opening doors for them far beyond competition."

Grant funding helped the BGA team travel to key events in 2025, elevating these Rocky Mount students to a national stage such as the UPA Championship in Arlington, TX and the Peach Belt Conference in Florence, S.C.

"Travel is a huge part of building a competitive program," Grant added. "Brightspeed's support helped us cover essentials like hotels, meals and transportation so our players could focus on performing at their best and representing NC Wesleyan."

Recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a Minority Serving Institution, North Carolina Wesleyan University is dedicated to serving students across central and eastern North Carolina, particularly those from economically distressed communities.

"This program has changed what I thought was possible for me," said Lamont Taylor, an NC Wesleyan student and esports player from Princeton, N.C. "We've been able to compete at a higher level and represent our university on bigger stages. It's not just about gaming. It's about learning technology, teamwork and skills that will help us in our future careers."

As Brightspeed continues building its fiber network across the state, these investments in local institutions and student programs remain an important part of its larger commitment to the communities it serves.

"This program shows what's possible when technology, education and opportunity come together," said Sabrina Anderson, local marketing manager at Brightspeed. "We're excited to see how these students continue to grow as competitors, creators and future technology leaders."

Brightspeed Fiber Internet is currently available to more than 800,000 families and businesses across North Carolina, with thousands more locations coming online every month. Residents and businesses can check if Brightspeed Fiber Internet is available in their area by visiting [www.brightspeed.com](http://www.brightspeed.com).

### 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](http://www.brightspeed.com).

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