

PUC Announces Pennsylvania's Internet All Stars

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HARRISBURG – The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) has announced four Pennsylvania residents who have been named Internet All Stars as part of a PUC campaign promoting high speed Internet subscription in rural parts of the state.

“High speed Internet service can offer a variety of benefits to users, including access to job opportunities, health information and government services,” said PUC Chairman Robert F. Powelson. “This campaign demonstrates just how valuable the service is for Pennsylvanians.”

The four were identified through the PUC's “I Do More with High Speed Internet” campaign, which launched earlier this year. Users of high speed Internet in Butler, Fayette, Mercer, Schuylkill and Westmoreland counties were encouraged to submit stories to the campaign's website explaining how they benefit from high speed Internet. The All Stars will be featured in print advertising scheduled to run in the five counties and on the “I Do More With High Speed Internet” website www.IDoMoreWithHighSpeedInternet.com.

The Internet All Stars are:

- Chuck Montag from Butler Township in Butler County
- Ned Souders from Barnesville in Schuylkill County
- D. Merle Skinner, the Executive Director of the Christian Family and Children Center in Fayette and Westmoreland counties
- Stephanie Myers, Office Manager of the Sparkle Market in Transfer, Mercer County.

Montag and his wife, Pat, said high speed Internet enables them to keep in touch with their son and his family. “We don't know where we would be without it,” said Montag, a customer of CenturyLink.

Souders, an antique car enthusiast, said high speed Internet makes it easy for him to shop for parts for his car restoration projects. “I spend so much more time building my cars rather than looking for pieces,” said Souders, a Frontier Communications customer.

Skinner said the service is critical to the Christian Family and Children Center, which uses high speed Internet to connect its campuses in Champion and Donegal.

“We could not offer the quality programs we have without it,” said Skinner, a Laurel Highland Total Communication customer.

Myers said high speed Internet changed the way the Sparkle Market does business. “It’s made life easier for our customers and all of us at the market,” said Myers, a PT Communications customer.

The print advertising encourages residents in the five counties to learn more about high speed Internet offerings in their area. A list of high speed Internet providers by county is available by calling the PUC at 1-800-692-7380 or visiting www.IDoMoreWithHighSpeedInternet.com. The “I Do More” campaign was designed to highlight the societal, medical and educational benefits of high speed Internet through the stories of residents and business owners in rural parts of the state. Adoption of high speed Internet in rural areas of Pennsylvania trails that of urban areas. In 2009, 56 percent of rural Pennsylvania households adopted high speed Internet compared to 68 percent of urban households, according to the Rural Pennsylvania Current Population Survey.

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission balances the needs of consumers and utilities to ensure safe and reliable utility service at reasonable rates; protect the public interest; educate consumers to make independent and informed utility choices; further economic development; and foster new technologies and competitive markets in an environmentally sound manner. For recent news releases, video and audio of select Commission proceedings or more information about the PUC, visit our website at www.puc.pa.gov.