



Directors Corner:

In this update, Director Schlegel invites you to upcoming broadband events, and shares our latest successes.



Registration for Broadband Bootcamp is open

The Office of Broadband Access and Expansion's (OBAE) mission is to support local leaders such as yourself in **bringing equitable connectivity to your community**. You are invited to register and attend this boot camp hosted by Institute for Local Self-Reliance and OBAE. Learn how to leverage this once-in-a-generation investment in infrastructure that is essential to closing the Digital Divide in New Mexico

- Learn more about broadband infrastructure and technologies for communities and local policy makers.
- Provide valuable input regarding broadband access and adoption in your community.

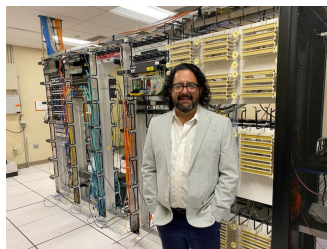
[REGISTER HERE](#)

CONGRATULATIONS PLATEAU!

Congratulations to Plateau for winning 49.8 million for the NTIA state middle mile. The past week was an exciting time as our Middle Mile program team announced over \$930 Million in awards for the Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program. Middle Mile Program Director Sarah Bleau and team joined Assistant Secretary Davidson, White House Infrastructure Coordinator Mitch Landrieu for this history-making announcement.

Counties Annual Conference in Farmington

Our very own Drew Lovelace and Alex Trujillo spoke at the 86th Counties Annual Conference. They covered equitable broadband access, the basics of broadband technology, and funding opportunities, and what counties can do to get ready.



SAVE THE DATE

Bratwurst and Broadband

July 29th at 3pm, OBAE is hosting our annual summer barbecue! Event is in Santa Fe and the address will be emailed day before the event.

Hope to see you there!

[REGISTER HERE](#)



INTERNET FOR ALL BROADBAND SUMMIT RECAP:

Recording

[Internet for All: New Mexico Broadband Summit](#)

Presentations

- [Connecting the Dots: Broadband is Everybody's Business](#)
- [Community Spotlight Mobilizing for Connectivity](#)
- [Digital Access Challenges and Solutions for New Mexico](#)
- [Connecting the Dots on the Map: FCC Data & Mapping Update](#)

New OBAE Team Members:

Jose Betancourt is a new PM with us. Jose comes to us from UPN and worked in the telecom/broadband industry from the technician level all the way to construction manager. We are excited to have Jose's knowledge and expertise joining the team.

Monica Riehl is a new PM with us. Monica is coming to us from the City of Sunland Park. Monica has a background of project management and even had a short stint with Google Fiber. As solutions-oriented go getter we are happy we can have her join us.

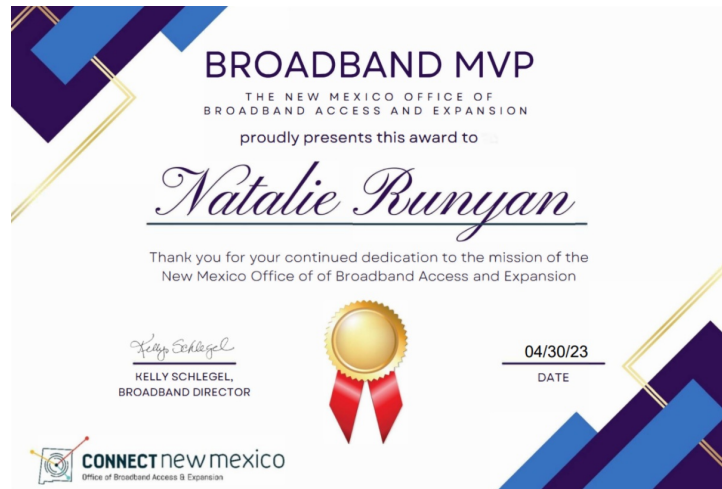
Luca Contarino is our summer intern. He is a film and media major at Wheaton College. He will be working closely with Alison on six films we would like to produce this summer. We are grateful he has chosen to bring his talents to OBAE for the summer.

Alison Riley is our new Public Information Officer; Alison comes to us with significant comms experience from campaigns across the country and even worked as a lobbyist during the last legislative session.

Richard Govea is a new PM who has been working in the broadband space for years. Most recently, Richard was with Dept. of Cultural Affairs - State Library working on broadband for libraries. We are excited to have Richard bring his tenure and broadband knowledge to the team.

Vanessa Willock is joining us as the OBAE General Counsel. Vanessa comes to us from Department of Public Safety specializing in EEO and has already helped move the ABQ lease forward! We are excited to have our own in-house counsel.

Broadband MVP



Q&A w/ Broadband MVP Natalie Runyan GIS Lead for Office of Broadband Access and Expansion

How did you get your start in GIS?

I started using GIS in graduate school at UNM in the early 90's. At UNM, I was the assistant zoologist for Natural Heritage New Mexico, the research branch of The Nature Conservancy, where I mapped threatened and endangered species occurrences such as warm spring snails and the Mexican spotted owl. The GIS was an analytical tool for development of species and habitat management plans as well as recommending to TNC lands most appropriate for their conservation focus.

What is your favorite part of your job?

Favorite part of my job is building tools that help people, from management to the general public, understand their world better.

What is your advice for someone new?

Advice for someone new: Pay attention to the details. People tend to look at a map or analysis outcome as "truth" without necessarily understanding or questioning your methods. However, if you start with bad assumptions or inaccurate data, or your methods are imprecise, you can very quickly conflate results and/or be outright wrong. Geographic Information Systems can be creative and artistic, and are very tied to information technology, but the field is a science and needs to be treated as such.

CONDOLENCES FROM OBAE DIRECTOR, KELLY SCHLEGEL:

I am saddened to hear about the passing of Joe Garcia. As a leader, he exemplified strength, wisdom, and compassion. His insights and unwavering determination will be missed. He was a beacon of hope and a voice for those who needed it, preserving the rich cultural heritage of Native American communities. He also was the keystone in ensuring Ohkay Owingeh was able to get broadband. In his passing, we are reminded of the immense impact he had on the lives he touched. His legacy will continue to inspire generations to come, and his remarkable contributions will be remembered and cherished.

I extend my deepest sympathies to the friends and loved ones as they mourn the tragic loss of Steve Metts. Steve served as the CEO of Valley TeleCom leading the cooperative to a strong financial position and driving innovation to meet the communication needs of its members. Most recently Steve, along with the Board and Management Team, worked in expanding Valley's fiber network into rural southeastern AZ and southwestern New Mexico. He also served as President of the New Mexico Exchange Carrier Group for 17 years. He was a knowledgeable and lovely person who will be sorely missed by so many.

In the news:

1. [New Dashboard Highlights Coordinated Federal Investments in High-Speed Internet Programs](#)
2. [Statement of Assistant Secretary Davidson on the nomination of Anna Gomez to the Federal Communications Commission](#)
3. [Biden-Harris Administration Announces \\$4.5 Million in Internet for All Grants to Tribal Lands](#)
4. [Three Takeaways from Version 2 of the FCC's National Broadband Map](#)
5. [Albuquerque's first broadband program manager preaches message of the importance of connections](#)
6. [New Mexico trying to build and train new workforce for broadband expansion](#)
7. [60% of San Ildefonso Pueblo residents have no internet; a new broadband project should help](#)
8. [USDA awards \\$43.3M to Oklahoma internet company that should benefit Union County in northeast NM](#)
9. [Albuquerque's First Broadband Program Manager](#)
10. [Rural NM deserves internet health, work and play, too](#)

Take our
Survey

Sincerely,

Kelly Schlegel, Director of the New Mexico Office of Broadband Access and Expansion.



If you have questions about any of these opportunities, please contact us via email at Broadband@doit.nm.gov.

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