



State Grant Pushes Asheville-based Public TV Content onto Web

Funds enable URTV programming to be viewed online through Webcasting and Video-on-Demand

Asheville, N.C. (Oct. 08, 2008) – Buncombe County’s public access television entity URTV today announces a state grant from the e-NC Authority that will enable the Asheville area’s only public access channel to share traditional broadcast programs on the Internet through Webcasting and Video-on-Demand (VOD) services.

The addition of Webcasting and VOD services allows individuals to view URTV programming in areas outside those covered by Charter Communications. Delivery of cable services in western North Carolina is often limited by mountainous terrain. Much of the community must resort to satellite services for television, which does not carry public access entities such as URTV. As a result, many URTV clients that generate public access programming for the area cannot view their own content.

((Webcasting)) will be made available of all URTV programming, and ((VOD)) services will be utilized for selected programming. These services will be available on www.urtv.org and www.urtvweb.com.

The legislative mandate of the e-NC Authority is researching statewide access to high-speed Internet services and advocating for telecommunications infrastructure deployment in underserved areas. Granting state funds to expand public access programming for availability online is a direct connection to the work of the e-NC Authority. “New availability of URTV programming online further demonstrates the need for every North Carolina citizen to have access to high-speed or broadband Internet service,” said Jane Smith Patterson, executive director of the e-NC Authority. “URTV is using this grant funding in such a smart way – it shows that they are growing and adapting with the needs of their audience.”

“The demand for services at URTV far exceeds our limited funding allocation – which shows how popular and valuable this channel’s programming is to the region,” said Pat Garlinghouse, executive director of URTV. “We see this grant as an opportunity to immediately expand our viewership and increase our community’s reach around the globe.”

Webcasting and VOD equipment for URTV was provided by Synergy Broadcast Systems out of Addison, Texas. “We are especially delighted to serve community operations like URTV in Asheville. Our focus on this project is providing turnkey support for URTV,” said Synergy Broadcast System Executive Vice President Chuck Jones. “It is obvious how robust and important this programming is for the region – so we’re excited to meet this long-term need for the local community.”

“Part of our reality is having a small budget,” says Garlinghouse. “And having a small budget means that you have to make and keep good friends in the public policy and business communities. URTV is fortunate to have pockets full of friends.”

About URTV:

Based in Asheville, N.C., URTV is community TV, not government TV, with a mission to empower every resident of the viewing community by providing equal opportunities to create and present television programming in keeping with First Amendment principles of free speech. URTV will air educational and informational programs, including news and discussion, political forums and civic meetings, as well as programs featuring entertainment and the arts. URTV is funded by Charter Communications subscribers and by grant funds raised by the organization’s staff and board. For more information, visit www.urtv.org or call (828) 255-8848.

About the e-NC Authority:

Devoted to connecting people to the Internet and a better future, the e-NC Authority works with all 100 of North Carolina's counties with a focus on rural and distressed urban areas. Created by the N.C. General Assembly, the e-NC Authority is dedicated to increasing prosperity for North Carolina citizens and businesses by creating jobs through technology-based economic development, which requires a broadband Internet platform for success. The e-NC Authority is based in Raleigh, N.C., and is supported through contributions from foundation, nonprofit, public and private entities. For more information, visit www.e-nc.org or call 1-866-627-8725.

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