

DVFiber

empowering our connection to the future



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DVFiber Votes to Partner With Great Works Internet to Secure Broadband Access

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At a special meeting on Thursday, July 1, the Deerfield Valley Communications Union District (DVCUD, dba DVFiber) Governing Board unanimously approved a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Great Works Internet (GWI) of Biddeford, ME in partnership with ValleyNet of Royalton, VT. This public/private partnership intends to secure broadband access for every home and business in the district, currently 24 member towns in three Vermont counties.

“We are pleased to begin work alongside GWI to complete this vitally important work,” said DVFiber Board Chair Ann Manwaring. “With this budding partnership, the vision of securing broadband access for everyone in our district is just that much closer to becoming a reality. We are fortunate to have funding from the American Recovery Act to accelerate our work.”

DVCUD was established in April 2020 by the towns of Halifax, Marlboro, Stratton, Whitingham, and Wilmington after each voted in favor at Town Meetings in March 2020. In just 15 months the district expanded to include 24 towns, each of which is committed to securing reliable high-speed Internet for all residents.

“GWI is incredibly excited to partner with DVFiber to bring fiber optic high-speed broadband to the DVFiber community, driven by choice and community asset ownership,” said GWI President and COO Kerem Durdag. “The reliable, robust and affordable open access network will allow the community to participate in 21st century activities like telehealth, remote working, distance

education. Participation will help create multigenerational opportunities for economic, personal and community development.”

Great Works Internet, an Internet Service Provider (ISP), is also a certified B-Corporation, a designation identifying for-profit companies that use the power of business to build a more inclusive and sustainable economy. GWI's stated values support open access, net neutrality, and data privacy. Based in Maine, GWI will bring ValleyNet to the partnership. ValleyNet has a nearly 20-year history of broadband network construction and operation in the Upper Valley, around White River Junction. ValleyNet currently partners with ECFiber, a 30-town CUD in the Connecticut River Valley, Vermont’s earliest communications union district.

"There are many solutions to ensure powerful broadband universal access in Vermont and I’m pleased that ValleyNet can be part of the solution for DVFiber,” stated ValleyNet Board Chair Carol Monroe. “It’s essential that we leave no town behind. Our partnership with GWI in serving the southern Vermont region brings the strength and expertise of two companies that have experience in delivering a high quality reliable service. This project strives to ensure all premises in the District will be able to receive affordable, accessible, high speed broadband fulfilling the needs of today and for many years to come."

Preconstruction work, engineering and design, is expected to begin this summer and fall with construction, hanging of fiber on phone poles, and drops to customers beginning in 2022. DVFiber’s business plan calls for fiber-based Internet to be available to unserved and poorly served areas by the end of 2024. GWI has committed to this goal, and will be coordinating closely with DVFiber on the commencement of the design and construction activities.

“This partnership is a great step forward for Rural Vermont,” said State Representative Laura Sibilio, who represents six towns in the Deerfield Valley Communications Union District.

“Bringing high speed Internet to Rural Vermont has been a commitment of mine ever since I was elected to the Vermont House of Representatives. CUDs, which are special purpose municipalities, were established by the Legislature to bring 21st century Internet connections to people who live where commercial providers would not go. I am so proud of all the volunteers who came together to make this happen, and I would like to thank the Legislators from all our District towns for their support.”

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