



For Immediate Release

Jan. 18, 2019

Contact: Scott Rochat
Longmont Power & Communications
303-651-8793 (office)/ 720-600-8295 (cell)
scott.rochat@longmontcolorado.gov

Christina Sims
Longmont Children, Youth and Families
303-774-3752
christina.sims@longmontcolorado.gov

Eric Hozempa
Longmont Community Foundation
303-678-6555
eric@longmontfoundation.org

“Sharing the NextLight” invites community to help low-income children
Organizers seek to raise \$60,000 by July 1

LONGMONT, CO – Longmont residents can help low-income children have access to essential internet services with “Sharing the NextLight.” This new program, offered in collaboration between the Longmont Community Foundation, Longmont Power & Communications, and Longmont Children, Youth and Families assists in bridging the “digital divide” these children may face in their educational needs.

Sharing the NextLight provides a free NextLight connection to qualifying low-income Longmont families with children in the St. Vrain Valley Schools. The families would receive a free symmetrical 25-megabit connection to their home, along with a combined modem/wireless router.

The first 20 families will begin to receive services in March. Initially, the Longmont Community Foundation aims to raise \$60,000 by July 1, so that 100 families can be served for the 2019-2020 school year. To support the program, donors should go to www.longmontfoundation.org, click on “Donate” and then choose “Sharing the NextLight.” All donations are tax-deductible.



“The internet is more vital to students than ever, and to support their child’s academic success, families ideally should have a fast and reliable connection in their own homes,” acting LPC general manager Susan Wisecup said. “We’re glad to help provide this, and in so doing, bring part of the City Council’s work plan for 2019 to fruition. Sharing the NextLight showcases our community’s willingness to support neighbors in need, allowing these families to benefit from the fiber-optic network that has made Longmont the first Gig City in Colorado.”

Rated the nation’s fastest ISP by PC Magazine, NextLight has been a partner of the St. Vrain schools since the network’s beginnings. The school district was an early customer, receiving a 10-gigabit redundant wide-area network by which the district gained 10 times its previous bandwidth while saving \$100,000 a year. Sharing the NextLight complements those efforts, allowing students access to high-quality internet service in both the school and the home.

“Sharing the NextLight fits so well with our mission of improving the community for all,” said Eric Hozempa, director of the Longmont Community Foundation. “Sharing the NextLight will help low-income students use the technology tools they need and not run the risk of falling behind their peers. We’re honored to play a part in helping these families succeed.”

To be considered, families will apply to Longmont Children, Youth and Families. Qualifying families must live in Longmont, have children attending K-12 in the St. Vrain school district, and receive free or reduced lunch assistance.

Christina Sims, division manager of Longmont Children, Youth and Families, praised the new program and the difference it could make to students.

“For those with limited access to resources, a digital divide can have an impact on their potential for success,” Sims said. “Our partnership with Longmont Power & Communications and with the Longmont Community Foundation is essential to addressing this divide in our community. We look forward to the support that Sharing the NextLight will offer to students and families!”



About Longmont Power & Communications

Longmont Power & Communications is a community-owned, not-for-profit electric and internet services utility that operates under the direction of Longmont City Council. Established in 1912, our goal is to deliver electric and communications services that provide outstanding value to our customer-owners. In 2014, we began to build and operate the NextLight fiber-optic broadband system, which is now the fastest ISP in the country and has made Longmont the first “gigabit city” in Colorado. To learn more, visit www.longmontcolorado.gov/lpc.

About the Longmont Community Foundation

Celebrating its 25th year in the community, the Longmont Community Foundation exists to improve life for all in the St. Vrain Valley through philanthropy and charitable leadership. To learn more, visit www.longmontfoundation.org.

About Longmont Children, Youth and Families

The division of Children, Youth and Families has provided support to families in Longmont for 33 years. We recognize that children live better lives when their families are strong, and families are strong when they live in communities that connect them to economic opportunities, social networks, and services. In the early '80s, a grassroots group of parents and community members raised funds to build a youth center as a gathering place for youth to have the opportunity to engage in positive activities in their community. Shortly after construction, this group of individuals asked the City of Longmont to take ownership and management over the Youth Center. Through the years, the Youth Center has provided various services in the community, ranging from youth groups to afterschool and family support programs. To learn more, visit www.longmontcolorado.gov/departments/departments-a-d/children-youth-and-families.