

2024 ANNUAL MEETING & EXPO

# REGISTRATION GUIDE

COMMUNITY CHOICE CREDIT  
UNION CONVENTION CENTER  
MARCH 25-27, 2024



THE VOICE FOR  
CONNECTIVITY

# GROWING BROADBAND



**ICA's Annual Meeting & Expo is the largest state telecommunications conference in the world. With over 1,000 attendees and 150+ exhibitors, you'll be sure to cultivate connections at the 2024 event. Explore the latest trends, connect with peers and partners, and learn about enhancing your products and services.**

## WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND?

- Stay up-to-date with the ever evolving landscape of the broadband business
- Boost your network by connecting with your peers and industry experts
- Find inspiration in your role
- Attend the world class exhibit hall for the latest technology, services and solution-providers
- Have fun and travel to Des Moines to enjoy the atmosphere of learning and growing
- Exchange views on shared industry challenges
- Expand your skills by learning more about your job and discover industry-specific knowledge that can help you grow

# REGISTRATION + PRICING

All conference attendees must register to attend conference events. Badges are required to attend all in-person conference events. Registration is not valid until ICA receives payment.

	REGULAR Deadline March 14, 2024	ON-SITE March 15-March 27, 2024
MEMBER FULL CONFERENCE	\$565	\$615
NONMEMBER FULL CONFERENCE	\$865	\$915
MEMBER ONE-DAY	\$365	\$415
NONMEMBER ONE-DAY	\$665	\$715
SPOUSE	\$365	\$415
STATE/FEDERAL RATE	\$75	\$75
STUDENT (HS/COLLEGE)	\$35	\$35

## WHAT'S INCLUDED IN YOUR CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Member and nonmember registration includes access to on-site conference events including all sessions, expo, receptions, food and beverages, and networking events.

## SPOUSE REGISTRATION

Spouse registration may be purchased for a spouse, partner, or significant other of a primary registrant and must accompany a primary member registration. Spouse registration includes all sessions, expo, receptions, food and beverages, and networking events.

## CANCELLATION + REFUND POLICY

All cancellations must be submitted via email to [brittany@iacommunicationsall.com](mailto:brittany@iacommunicationsall.com). Cancellations must be submitted by the close of business day listed below. The schedule listed below details the refund percentage available based on cancellation date. Unclaimed registrations during the event are not eligible for a refund. Conference registrations are transferable to other staff members in your organization. However, they are not transferable to other ICA events.

- **February 21, 2024 (and earlier) – 100% refund**
- **February 22 - March 6, 2024 - 50% refund**
- **March 7, 2024 (and after) - no refunds issued**



## HOTEL & TRAVEL INFO

### HOTEL INFORMATION

ICA Annual Meeting & Expo will take place at the Community Choice Credit Union Convention Center in downtown Des Moines, Iowa. There are two hotel block options, Hilton and Marriott for the 2024 Annual Meeting & Expo. We have several surrounding hotel recommendations not with a hotel block for the conference if those are sold-out. Please check the ICA website for a complete listing and current room block availability.

- **Hilton Downtown Des Moines - \$167+ / night (515) 241-1456**
- **Marriott Downtown Des Moines - \$161+ /night (515) 245-5500**

### TRAVEL INFORMATION

Nearby Airport: Des Moines International Airport is approximately 10 miles / 15 mins from hotels.








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**MONDAY,  
MARCH 25<sup>TH</sup>**

# MONDAY, MARCH 25<sup>TH</sup>

11:00-3:00 PM	<b>REGISTRATION</b>
10:00-12:45 PM	<b>LUNCHEONS</b>
10:00-12:45 pm	<b>Leadership Academy Session and Alumni Luncheon</b>
11:30-12:45 pm	<b>New Attendee Luncheon</b> <i>(Members Only)</i> SPONSORED BY: 
1:00-3:00 PM	<b>OPENING &amp; KEYNOTE</b>
	<b>President's Opening, Annual Meeting of the Membership and Awards Ceremony</b> Tim Fencl, Danville Telecom, 2023-24 ICA Board President <b>KEYNOTE: Discover Your Why. Become the Change.</b> Dean Jacobs Businesses and individuals understand the benefits of creating a strong community but are struggling to make it happen, oftentimes not even knowing where to begin. By cutting through distractions and getting to the heart of what's really important, Dean's presentations ignite a conversation, reconnecting people to their own why. Through a series of activities, actions and frameworks, audiences discover how to use this insight to expand their communities. SPONSORED BY: 
3:00-3:30 PM	<b>COFFEE &amp; BEVERAGE BREAK</b> SPONSORED BY: 
3:30-5:00 PM	<b>GENERAL SESSIONS</b>
	<b>NOFA 9/BEAD Update</b> Matt Behrens, DOM-DOIT, and invited Christopher Hall, NTIA Hear the latest information on BEAD/NOFA 9 directly from Iowa's top broadband leaders. This panel discussion will include Matt Behrens, Chief Information Officer at DOM-DOIT(f/k/a OCIO) and Christopher Hall, Iowa's Federal Program Officer from NTIA. Mr. Behrens oversees Iowa's plan to administer the \$415 million in BEAD funding this year, while Mr. Hall is the liaison from NTIA helping guide the Iowa plan. We expect a lot of developments to occur between now and March 25th, so don't miss this opportunity to learn the latest news as ICA's Dave Duncan moderates this discussion. SPONSORED BY: 
	<b>Building Our Communities (not just fiber): Economic Development Panel</b> Jamie Daubendiek, Jefferson Telecom; Mark Thoma, WCTA; Deb Lucht, Minburn Communications; Jacki Miskimins, Vantage Point Solutions As community-based broadband providers, the strength of our communities is critical to our businesses and our quality of life. WCTA, Jefferson Telecom, and Minburn Communications have gotten hands-on with local economic development efforts, and will share the things they've tried, challenges they've run into, and what they've found helpful; including how to identify needs, discern best ideas, and get the work done. SPONSORED BY: 
5:00-6:00 PM	<b>NETWORKING RECEPTION</b> SPONSORED BY:  

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**TUESDAY,  
MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup>**

# TUESDAY, MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup>

7:30-9:00 AM	<b>WOMEN IN TELECOM SESSION</b> <b>Inspire &amp; Strive for a Positive Impact</b> <i>(Members Only)</i> <b>Breakfast buffet provided in session room</b> Dr. Claire Muselman, Drake University Dr. Muselman's focus on empathetic, emotionally intelligent leadership at Drake University fosters well-being and growth, reflecting her commitment to educating current and future leaders. With nearly two decades in Workers' Compensation and risk management she's had to pull her way to the top in a primarily male-dominated industry much like many of you. She's pioneered initiatives, advocating for inclusivity, diversity, and community service. You'll leave this session knowing how to stay on top and have a positive impact within your organization. <b>SPONSORED BY:</b> 
8:00-9:00 AM	<b>NETWORKING BREAKFAST</b>
9:00-9:40 AM	<b>BREAKOUT SESSIONS 1</b>
9:00 - 9:40 am	<b>INNOVATION High-Tech Activities – The Relationship Between ISPs and Communities</b> Kaleb Dschaak, Fenworks Kaleb Dschaak, the founder of Fenworks (a K-12 high-tech activities company) will discuss how ISPs are changing the game by getting involved. These high-tech activities – Esports, Drone Racing, Hackathons, and more – are happening in our communities and they take place on the incredible infrastructure developed by ICA members. Learn how to be one of the leaders and promoters of youth activities with these innovative solutions.
9:00 - 9:40 am	<b>BOARD OF DIRECTORS Best Practices for Board Succession in Today's "Too Busy" World!</b> Dan Caldwell, Consortia Consulting You will explore the critical topic of ensuring effective leadership transition within your organization. You will also delve into the strategies, best practices and challenges associated with board succession planning in this ever-busy world.
9:00 - 9:40 am	<b>TECHNICAL You're Telling Me I'm a Technician and CSR?</b> Lance Baker, Huxley Communications Cooperative Let's talk about Customer Service from the view of a Technician. This may be getting lost as new techs come into the field. This session will cover the importance of it and what needs to be touched on that we are the respected companies we are because of the history we have with the customers. Then throw in the fact that customers are aging, technology is changing, and frustrations (from the customer and technician) are growing because of it.
9:00 - 9:40 am	<b>LEADERSHIP Attracting and Retaining Top Talent</b> Marty Fredericks, FORVIS As Baby Boomers continue to retire at an alarming rate, attracting and retaining top talent is more important than ever. It doesn't matter if your organization is located in a rural area or at the heart of a city, there are more job openings than individuals to fill them. In this session we will cover new ideas, trends and best practices in hiring and making sure your top performers are rewarded appropriately so that they continue to be your employees.



# TUESDAY, MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup> (CONTINUED)

9:00 - 9:40 am

## **MARKETING/CSR** Marketing and CSR Roundtable

Moderators: Roman Slabach (Slabach Construction), Amanda Scherer (Adtran), & Katie Miller (Sharon Telephone)

Industry experts and professionals will come together to discuss the latest trends, strategies and challenges in your profession. This will be an interactive session that will provide valuable insight and practical solutions for enhancing customer experiences, optimizing marketing budgets, and driving business growth.

9:45-10:25 AM

## **BREAKOUT SESSIONS 2**

9:45-10:25 am

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** Safeguarding Business Resilience: Ransomware and Cybersecurity Essentials for Board of Directors

Brandon Potter & Brandon Blankenship, ProCircular

In an era where ransomware threats pose significant business risks, board members' proactive engagement is paramount. This presentation offers a concise yet comprehensive overview of ransomware's impact and cybersecurity basics tailored to the Board of Directors. Join Brandon Potter, ProCircular's CTO, and Brandon Blankenship, ProCircular's CISO, as they explore real-world ransomware cases, delve into the anatomy of a ransomware attack, and illuminate hidden risks beyond the technical fallout. In this presentation, you'll learn strategies to:

- Cohesively collaborate between boards, executives, and IT teams.
- Foster a culture of cyber awareness.
- Confidently guide your organization through evolving ransomware challenges.

9:45-10:25 am

### **TECHNICAL** New Hardware Trends and Spectrum Updates in the Wireless Broadband Industry

Sergui Albu, Cambium Networks

Wireless providers join me during this session that will cover new trends and technologies and best practices in the field. There's an abundance of technologies to make your job more efficient but are you feeling a bit overwhelmed with what there is to offer? Let's work through your needs and how to best utilize the technology for your space.

9:45-10:25 am

### **GENERAL** Operation IFAST: How ISPs Can Make a Difference in the Fight Against Sex Trafficking

Chris Lovell of CL Tel, Andrea Perry of Guardian Group

This session will explore some dark truths about our networks, and what we can do to address that. The Internet is the most common place for recruiting sex trafficking victims and facilitating their abuse.

- 150,000 new escort ads are posted online every day in America
- 75% of underage victims report being sold online

As ISPs, our Internet service can be used for immense good, but unfortunately, it can also be used for unthinkable evil. We have the opportunity – and responsibility – do what's right and join the fight. Chris Lovell (CL Tel) and Andrea Perry (Guardian Group) will provide an overview of the heinous and dark world of sex trafficking – a world that includes the rural Iowa communities we all serve. They will then introduce the incredible work being done by Guardian Group, a non-profit organization that provides free research support to Law Enforcement for investigating sex trafficking. Finally, Chris and Andrea will outline an actionable plan for ICA and its members to join the fight and make a difference.

# TUESDAY, MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup> (CONTINUED)

9:45-10:25 am

**MARKETING/CSR AI: The Secret Weapon of Small Marketing Teams**

Roman Slabach, Slabach Construction

In today's fast-paced digital landscape, small marketing teams face the daunting challenge of competing with larger counterparts. This is where artificial intelligence (AI) steps in as the ultimate ally. AI serves as an invaluable force multiplier, allowing small teams to punch above their weight. It streamlines the laborious tasks that once consumed precious time and resources, such as data analysis, content creation, and campaign optimization. AI doesn't just automate; it empowers. It offers cost-efficient solutions that not only stretch marketing budgets but also deliver exceptional returns on investment. In essence, AI isn't just a tool; it's a strategic partner that amplifies the capabilities of small marketing teams, enabling them to thrive and innovate in an ever-evolving marketing landscape. Still not convinced? The title and paragraph above were all written by AI. This session will cover some actionable steps for marketing teams to incorporate AI into their teams. Towards the end of the session individuals in attendance will be encouraged to share how their teams have embraced AI.

9:45-10:25 am

**TECHNICAL Technician Roundtable**

Moderated by Karlin Kelley (HunTel Engineering)

This will be an exclusive gathering of technical experts and professionals from various levels of technical background. During the interactive roundtable, participants will have the opportunity to discuss emerging technologies, industry best practices and fastest trends in their respective fields.

10:25-10:45 AM

**COFFEE AND BEVERAGE BREAK**

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10:45-11:25 AM

**BREAKOUT SESSIONS 3**

10:45-11:25 am

**TECHNICAL Safety Incident Investigation - What Happens When it Goes Wrong and YES Your Company is Responsible**

Brent Trickel, MTA Safety Program

Join in with your fellow Technicians to hear what you need to know about the safety of yourself and your staff. Our staff of safety professionals have extensive training and experience with all types of telecommunications safety concerns. This training has given them the expertise needed to serve our clients in today's rapidly changing safety, health and environmental arena. You'll hear a real example of something that went wrong and how we can make it right!

# TUESDAY, MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup> (CONTINUED)

10:45-11:25 am

## **MARKETING/CSR** Fiber to the Subscriber: Cultivating Brand Loyalty While Engaging Communities

Amanda Scherer, Adtran

Today's fiber environment challenges operators to grow beyond just fiber-to-the-home providers and become the provider of fiber experiences subscribers want. Learn how to cultivate your customer loyalty through customer-centric Wi-Fi offerings, locally targeted marketing campaigns, and community engagement by maximizing partnerships and software in your network. This session will look at trends and best practices for using subscriber analytics and community data to customize Wi-Fi and value-added services. Then, once we understand our community, we'll cover ways to customize marketing campaigns and enhance community engagement, so you become the go-to provider for the service subscribers actually want.

10:45-11:25 am

## **INNOVATION** AI - What Impact Will It Have on Our Industry?

Bob Gnapp, NECA

This session provides an exploration of artificial intelligence: what it is, what it can do today and what it may be able to do tomorrow. The session will also focus on the telecommunications industry and AI's promise for growth opportunities as well as potential operational disruptions. In recent years, AI has simplified tasks performed by businesses, including rural local exchange carriers. This is just the beginning of AI-based technologies that promise to improve almost every aspect of operations including network design, real-time network optimization, customer service, personalized marketing, product development and preventive maintenance. AI may also present future challenges, e.g., the potential use of AI by digital attackers breaking into networks. This session will benefit anyone interested in artificial intelligence.

10:45-11:25 am

## **GENERAL** The Pursuit of Happiness?

Steve Riat, Nex-Tech

Despite happiness being a primary human motivation, only one in three Americans say they're very happy. We know that the state of being happy can: increase productivity, increase our pay, make us healthier, make us more alert, alive and awake, and makes us more compassionate. This humorous presentation will have you walking away with a smile and some thoughts on how to energize your pursuit of happiness and you can take it back to the office with you to help others do the same.

10:45-11:25 am

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** Board of Directors Roundtable

Doug Eidahl, JD, Vantage Point Solutions

Join your fellow Iowa Board Members for an opportunity to engage in open round table discussions. Hear about current and future opportunities, challenges and issues other ICA member companies are dealing with. Items of discussion will include increasing demand for broadband, changes in technology, financial challenges and opportunities, competitive threats, video and OTT trends, impacts of various funding programs on Iowa companies; just to name a few items!

# TUESDAY, MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup> (CONTINUED)

## 11:30-12:15 PM BREAKOUT SESSIONS 4

11:30-12:15 pm

### **TECHNICAL** Growing Pains: IPv6 and the Future of IPv4

Jason Andersen, Aureon

Join us for an informative session where we delve into the current state of IPv6 adoption and its significance for service providers. We will cover a wide range of topics to provide a holistic understanding of IPv6, its history, adoption trends, and why it is crucial for service providers to continue their pursuit of IPv6 integration. Additionally, we will explore the benefits of Carrier-Grade Network Address Translation (CGNAT) to help bridge the gap between IPv4 and IPv6, as well as the importance of protecting the client experience as we navigate the IPv6 adoption journey.

11:30-12:15 pm

### **GENERAL** Fiber Access is the Best Choice for Broadband Funding. Here is Why!

Jessica Koch, Calix

Most of us have heard that fiber access is “better,” but that’s a fluffy statement. Is it faster? More reliable? Compared to what? Copper, Cable, Wireless? Well, the US government is on board! In its quest to build the critical broadband infrastructure that will serve generations to come, the \$42.5 billion NTIA Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program prioritizes the funding of fiber over other technologies! This session will discuss why fiber access is the best choice, where service providers can find capital to build out their networks, and how they should work with their states to extend their position.

1. Fiber networks meet today’s demands and tomorrow’s expansion.
2. Funding is available at a once in a generation level, capitalize on it.
3. Combining funding and futureproof networks is a key to success today and into the next generation.

11:30-12:15 pm

### **LEADERSHIP** The Great Transition

Ed Wolff, NISC

You have survived the Great Transition from a noncompetitive Telecom company to extremely competitive technology company. What’s next? Three key points that attendees will learn from the presentation:

1. Stay focused on a culture of service
2. Be relentless in looking for incremental improvements
3. Stay vigilant (Cyber Awareness)

11:30-12:15 pm

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** Board Governance and Understanding of Financial Statements

Todd Thorson, FORVIS

This session will discuss the role of the board of directors including long-range planning, internal controls, and expected decision making. It will also further explore monthly and annual financial statement review and key indicators to be aware of.

# TUESDAY, MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup> (CONTINUED)

<b>12:15-1:00 PM</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
12:15-1:00 pm	<b>Networking Lunch</b>
11:30-1:00 pm	<b>ICA Board Meeting Lunch</b>
<b>1:00 - 5:00 PM</b>	<b>EXPO HALL</b>
<b>3:45 - 5:00 PM</b>	<b>MANAGERS MEETING</b>
3:45-5:00 pm	<b>GENERAL MANAGERS General Managers and CEOs Policy Update</b> <i>(for General Managers and key personnel)</i> Dave Duncan, ICA; John Pietila, Dentons Davis Brown; and Mike St Clair, Capitol Edge Join ICA General Counsel John Pietila, Lobbyist Mike St. Clair, and CEO Dave Duncan for an open discussion that centers around your questions regarding all state and federal legislative, regulatory and industry trends as well as the latest on all the broadband funding programs. They will highlight the impact of all these developments on your business and how to cultivate connections in 2024.
<b>5:00-6:00 PM</b>	<b>EXPO HALL NETWORKING RECEPTION</b> SPONSORED BY: <b>DENTONS</b> <b>DAVIS BROWN</b>
<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>DINNER &amp; VENDOR APPRECIATION EVENTS</b> Dinner on your own or check the "Vendor Appreciation Events" listed on the Annual Meeting & Expo landing webpage.

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**WEDNESDAY,  
MARCH 27<sup>TH</sup>**

# WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27<sup>TH</sup>

7:30-8:30 AM	<b>NETWORKING BREAKFAST</b>
8:30-9:15 AM	<b>BREAKOUT SESSIONS</b>
8:30-9:15 am	<b>CYBER Directing Cybersecurity with Wisdom</b> Ryan Pieken, OXEN Technology While directors do not have to be experts in cybersecurity, they play a crucial role in the cybersecurity program of an organization. That role goes beyond allocating funds to bolster your cybersecurity defenses. Come to this session to learn about common decisions directors are faced with and how you can serve your organization in a way that is not too far removed, or too far into the minutia of cybersecurity.
8:30-9:15 am	<b>LEADERSHIP Reporting &amp; Compliance for Grant Programs</b> Kristy Szabo, Vantage Point Solutions Managing compliance for a single grant or loan is tough; and if you've been successful in multiple programs, it can get overwhelming quickly! OCIO (now DOM-DOIT), RUS, NTIA all have different portals, different formats, different requests, different schedules, different requirements, different timelines. It's hard to keep straight, and no fun to live with a nagging feeling that you've forgotten a piece. So how do you do it? Kristy Szabo will answer that, sharing best practices and hard-won insights from her experiences, including gotchas, near-misses, and why sometimes the obvious solution isn't obvious.
8:30-9:15 am	<b>VIDEO Where Do We Go With Video</b> Jean Edhlund, CNS Many operators are at a crossroads with their video product. 2023 saw another cycle of retransmission consent negotiations and more and more content shifting to streaming services. Whether you are considering shutting down your video, or if you are committed to providing a high-quality, competitive, pay-tv service; you'll want to have the most up to date information where the industry is headed and what other companies (large and small) are doing.
8:30-9:15 am	<b>TECHNICAL Adopting Dual Stacking IPv4 &amp; IPv6</b> Frank Bulk, Premier Communications & David Garland, Panora Fiber Let's talk about how to Dual Stack your IPv4 and IPV6 and adopting this method for ITCs. Using Dual Stack capabilities in broadband funding requirements will help you set yourself apart from other bidders. We'll learn how to do this, address positives and negatives, costs, and transitional technologies.
8:30-9:15 am	<b>MARKETING/CSR Unleashing the Power of Marketing on a Tight Budget and Small Staff - Key Tactics to Supercharge Your Campaigns</b> Cheryl O'Hern, Spin Markket + Digital Navigating marketing on a tight budget and with limited staff can be tough, but it needn't be a roadblock to success! With a little creativity and problem-solving, even those with limited resources can boost their marketing impact—no matter what size their team is! Put those creative thinking caps on and let's explore ways to make an impact with minimal resources. We'll learn to make the most of every dollar and turn those few necessary staff into a power-packed mini-marketing team! Are you excited to take your small budget and limited staff and turn it into a fully optimized and powerful marketing plan? Let's get started!

# WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27<sup>TH</sup> (CONTINUED)

9:15-11:00 AM	EXPO HALL
9:15-11:00 AM	COFFEE & BEVERAGES IN EXPO HALL SPONSORED BY: 
11:00-12:30 PM	KEYNOTE & CLOSING REMARKS

## **It's Always Personal**

Aaron Putze, Iowa Soybean Association

Shift to a new gear personally and professionally by building and sustaining relationships and building a stronger team through greater connectivity! Yes, goals and results matter in the communications business, but people matter most! Be prepared to learn, laugh and engage as Aaron shares powerful and relatable stories gleaned from personal experiences and conversations with superlative leaders in finance, agriculture, business, sports, and education. His fast-paced and heartfelt storytelling combined with compelling visuals, relatable experiences and practical and actionable insights will motivate and inspire as we recruit and retain talent and position leaders for expanded roles and responsibilities. In addition to being challenged and entertained, you'll walk away with actionable intel to help you be of greater value to others and take on challenges with a new perspective and momentum benefiting you and your customers!

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## **A Look Ahead and Prize Giveaways**

Jamie Daubendiek, Jefferson Telecom, 2024-25 ICA Board President





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