

Celebrating National Co-op Month

Guided by Principles - Focused on You

Being a local cooperative means more than just providing internet, it means putting people first. Every October, we celebrate National Co-op Month, a time to reflect on the cooperative principles that continue to shape how we operate and serve our members and customers.

FOCUS Broadband was founded in 1955 by residents who believed rural communities like Brunswick County deserved access to essential communication services. When larger companies wouldn't invest here, our community stepped up. What started as a small telephone cooperative has grown into a leading broadband provider serving communities across eastern North Carolina.

Through every advancement, our values remain the same and we continue to be guided by these cooperative principles:

Voluntary & Open Membership - We're owned by you, our members.

Democratic Member Control - You elect a Board of Directors to represent your voice.

Autonomy & Independence - We answer to our members, not outside investors.

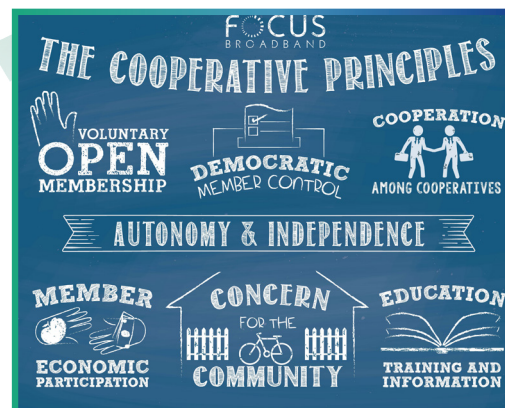
Education, Training & Information - We provide connectivity for jobs and online learning.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives - We partner with other co-ops to strengthen services.

Concern for Community - We support our community through grants, scholarships, and donations.

Member Economic Participation - Revenues beyond expenses are reinvested into the cooperative and eventually returned to members.

From capital credit refunds to network expansion and community support, everything we do is rooted in these principles and in our commitment to you. Thank you for being a member!



The Suds of Love Truck

Receives Community Connections Grant



A FOCUS Broadband Community Connection Grant is helping *The Suds of Love Truck* provide local residents access to washers and dryers. The mobile outreach program also distributes care packages stocked with essentials like toothbrushes, toothpaste, and travel-sized toiletries.

"Funds from this grant will allow us to reach more families in need and ensure they have access to clean laundry and basic hygiene items that many of us take for granted," said Tina Bowen, Founder and Executive Director of *The Suds of Love Truck*.

FOCUS Broadband awards \$40,000 in Community Grant funds annually to nonprofit organizations across its service area. The application window for the 2026 Community Connections Grant program will open on December 1st 2025.

Nonprofit organizations helping residents in communities we serve are encouraged to apply by visiting focusbroadband.com/givingback.

Celebrating 70 Years of Connectivity:

Paving the Way for Women Company-wide

Our 70-year milestone is not just about FOCUS Broadband; it's also about the people who made our journey possible. One of those pioneers is Myrtle Stevenson, whose dedication and trail-blazing spirit helped pave the way for future generations.

A Brunswick County native, Myrtle took pride in working for the telephone company and going the extra mile to keep customers connected. "It was something we were proud of, not just a job," she shared.

Myrtle joined the company in 1973 and made history at FOCUS Broadband as the first woman to work in the plant department. This was a major milestone in what was then a male-dominated field. She retired in 2006, but her impact and commitment continue to inspire us today.





Scan to Watch
Interview!


Staying Safe Online: *Simple Tips*


At FOCUS Broadband, we're committed not only to keeping you connected, but also to helping you stay safe while you're online. Cyber threats like phishing scams, malware, and identity theft are more common than ever, but adopting a few smart online habits can go a long way in protecting your personal information.


Here are a few quick tips to boost your cyber safety:

 **Use Strong, Unique Passwords** - Create passwords that are at least 12 characters long and include a mix of letters, numbers, and symbols. Avoid using the same password across multiple accounts.

 **Watch Out for Phishing Emails** - Don't click on links or download attachments if an email looks suspicious, even if it appears to come from a known source. Look for red flags like poor grammar, urgent language, or unfamiliar email addresses.

 **Update Devices** - Regular software updates often include important security patches. Enable automatic updates on your computer and other connected devices.

 **Use Two-Factor Authentication** - Adding a second step to logins, like a text code or authentication app, adds an extra layer of protection to your accounts.

 **Secure Your Home Network** - Make sure your Wi-Fi network is password protected.

Cybersecurity doesn't have to be complicated — small steps can make a big difference. Stay smart, stay alert, and stay safe online!

Now Accepting *Scholarship Applications*

Scan
to apply!



Now through December 5th, FOCUS Broadband will be accepting scholarship applications from high school seniors! To be eligible, applicants or their legal guardians must be customers of FOCUS Broadband.

Ten \$2,000 scholarships will be awarded, and recipients will be selected based on academics, school-sponsored activities, community involvement, and interview skills.

To access the application and guidelines, scan the QR code, or visit focusbroadband.com/scholarships.