

# Waves of Change

DON'T GET SWEEPED AWAY!

2025 WTA SPRING EDUCATIONAL FORUM  
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

APRIL 13-16, 2025 • MIRAMAR BEACH, FL



ADVOCATES FOR RURAL BROADBAND



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# WELCOME TO MIRAMAR BEACH!

## WTA Spring Forum Schedule *(subject to change)*

### SUNDAY | APRIL 13, 2025

4:00 - 7:00p      **Table-Top Exhibit Set Up**  
*Emerald Ballroom Foyer*

6:00 - 9:00p      **WTA Registration**  
*Emerald Registration Desk*

8:00 - 9:00p      The **Welcome Reception** is exclusively for Full and Social registered attendees. **Unregistered guests will not be permitted to attend.** If you wish to bring a guest, you can purchase a Social Registration during check-in.  
*Sponsors: MP Nex-Level; NECA; NRTC; Olsen Thielen; and TCA, Inc.*  
*Emerald Ballroom Foyer*

### MONDAY | APRIL 14, 2025

7:00 - 11:30a      **WTA Registration**  
*Emerald Registration Desk*

7:00 - 11:00a      **Table-Top Exhibits | Breaks**  
*Emerald Ballroom Foyer*

8:00a - 4:00p      **RUS Meetings by Appointment**  
*Emerald Ballroom A*

8:00 - 11:30a      **GENERAL SESSION I**  
*Emerald Ballroom A*

8:00 - 8:30a      • Invocation / Pledge of Allegiance / Welcome - Jack Keen (WMT), WTA Board Member, Emeritus and Pat McElroy, WTA President

8:30 - 9:30a      • **Waves of Change, Don't Get Swept Away (Future Trends in Technology and the Industry)**, Keynote Speaker Dr. Shawn DuBravac, Global Futurist and Author  
*Sponsored by: CoBank*



9:30 - 10:00a **Morning Coffee Break | Table-Top Exhibits**  
*Sponsored by: Chickasaw Telephone Company*

10:00 - 11:30a • **WTA's Public Policy Committee Update - Evelyn Jerden (co-chair), LICT, Mark Gailey (co-chair) Totah Communications, and WTA Staff** will update attendees about public policies at the federal level and discuss what WTA is doing to shape those policies to ensure its members are able to continue bringing modern communications technologies to their communities.

11:30a **ADJOURN GENERAL SESSION I**

12:00p **WTA Spring Golf Tournament | Shotgun Start at 12:30pm**  
Transportation is on your own (10-minute drive from hotel).  
*Beverage Cart Sponsored by IDI Billing Solutions; Prizes Sponsored by Hylan West; Golf Balls Sponsored by Moss Adams and Lunch Sponsored by Aldrich Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort: Raven Golf Club*

6:00 - 9:00p Join us for the **Poolside Party (Ticket Required for this Event)**  
Get ready for an unforgettable night at the **Poolside Party sponsored by NOKIA**, where the beach meets the pool in the ultimate celebration! Enjoy stunning ocean views, live music, delicious coastal cuisine, and ice-cold beverages under the warm Florida sky. Dance to the rhythm of tropical beats by SeaSquare Trio, feel the breeze, and immerse yourself in the good vibes all around. Sing along to classic Jimmy Buffett hits like "Margaritaville" and "Cheeseburger in Paradise," and let the music transport you to a tropical state of mind. **Ticket and name badges are REQUIRED for entry (they are included with all Full and Social Registrations). Individual tickets will NOT be available for purchase at the door. If you wish to bring a guest stop by the Registration Desk on Monday morning.**

*Sponsored by: Nokia*  
*Barefoots Deck (weather back up location: Coastal ABC)*

## TUESDAY | APRIL 15, 2025

7:00a - 4:00p **WTA Registration (Closed during Lunch)**  
*Emerald Registration Desk*

7:00a - 4:00p **Table-Top Exhibits | Breaks**  
*Emerald Ballroom Foyer*

7:00 - 8:00a **CyberTech Committee Breakfast Meeting**  
*Emerald Ballroom A*

7:00 - 8:00a **Scholarship Committee Breakfast Meeting**  
*Emerald Ballroom B*

9:00a - 5:00p **RUS Meetings by Appointment**  
*Emerald Ballroom A*

9:00a - 5:00p **UNITEL Meetings by Appointment**  
*Emerald Ballroom B*

8:00a - 12:00p **GENERAL SESSION II**  
*Emerald Ballroom CDE*

8:00 - 9:00a • **Economic Insights - Jeff Johnston, CoBank**



**9:00 - 10:00a • Strategic Growth Through M&A and Partnerships: Expanding Revenue Streams and Market Reach**

In today's competitive landscape, mergers, acquisitions, and strategic partnerships can be powerful tools for accelerating growth, diversifying revenue, and enhancing market positioning. **Tory Richtmyer, JSI (Moderator), Bhavini Sokhey, JSI; Chris Townson, West Carolina; and Karen Jackson-Furman, WK&T** will explore best practices for identifying the right opportunities, structuring deals for long-term success, and navigating the challenges of integration. Industry leaders will share real-world insights on leveraging M&A and partnerships to drive sustainable expansion while mitigating risks. This discussion will provide actionable strategies to unlock new value.

**10:00 - 10:30a Morning Coffee Break | Table-Top Exhibits**

*Sponsored by: JSI*

*Emerald Ballroom Foyer*

**10:30 - 11:15a • What We Assume: Lessons Learned from a Decade in Cyber**

Cybersecurity is often a game of assumptions. The things that go wrong in cybersecurity often go wrong in proportion to the assumptions that one makes. In a rapidly changing threat landscape, how do we focus on building defenses that actually make a difference to business outcomes? By constantly questioning, evaluating, and challenging our assumptions! **Matt Kiely, Principal Security Researcher at Huntress**, will cover emerging threats, lessons learned from a decade-plus in offensive and defensive cybersecurity, and important takeaways about how our assumptions come back to bite us!

**11:15a - 12:00p • Continuous Improvement: How the Fabric Has Gotten Better**

**Jack Nettleton and Alex Meyer of CostQuest Associates** will show how the creators of the FCC's Location Fabric verifies and validates all 116M+ broadband serviceable locations in the US. The CostQuest team will review their processes and how they have incorporated feedback from WTA members, and others, to improve location accuracy in rural America.

**12:00p**

**ADJOURN GENERAL SESSION II** *(Lunch on Your Own)*

**12:00 - 1:15p**

**WTA Public Policy Committee Luncheon Meeting**

*-This meeting is open to WTA broadband and committee members only-*

*Sponsored by: Monte R. Lee & Company*

*Emerald Ballroom CDE*

**1:30 - 5:00p**

**GENERAL SESSION III**

*Emerald Ballroom CDE*

**1:30 - 2:15p**

**• What's Behind the Waves: What Will Drive Success in 2025 and Beyond?**

**Chad Duval and Camille Christiansen, Moss Adams** will provide a brief current overview of the rural broadband industry and then focus on four themes to ride the "Waves of Change" so you "Don't Get Swept Away" to drive success in the years ahead. The first theme is Market and Customer Clarity; where is the rural broadband market heading and what will your customers demand of you? The second theme is Mission Clarity; how do you measure service line profitability, capture more customers, operate more efficiently, and measure success? The third theme is Cash Flow Clarity; how do you drive customer and revenue growth through new and innovative broadband offerings while efficiently utilizing resources to enable the growth? The final theme is Competitive Clarity; how do you better understand who your true competitors are, what they are doing to attract your customers, and what you need to do to effectively compete?



- 2:15 - 3:00p** • **Moving Toward a Self-Healing Network: Transforming Your Network with Software, Automation and AI**  
**Jon Scheler, 7Sigma Systems** will discuss ways to help your company leverage automation, integrated software platforms, and AI to transform your ISP and carrier networks into self-reporting and eventually self-healing systems. Predictive analytics, intelligent monitoring, and automated troubleshooting can empower providers to deliver superior performance and reliability while reducing operational complexities. Discover practical strategies for implementing these tools to enhance network efficiency, reduce downtime, and move toward a self-healing network.
- 3:00 - 3:30p** **Afternoon Cocktail Break | Table-Top Exhibits**  
*Sponsored by: JSI*  
*Emerald Ballroom Foyer*
- 3:30 - 4:15p** • **Edge Computing**  
**Bob Gnapp, NECA** will introduce attendees to edge computing and its potential effect on RLEC operations and networking. Edge computing is a computing paradigm that processes data closer to the source of its generation or at the “edge” of a network, rather than relying solely on centralized data centers or cloud-based systems. It has the potential to both positively and negatively affect RLECs. Bob will discuss pros and cons and help you better prepare for the expected growth in edge computing as well as engage in the revenue opportunities presented by this technology.
- 4:15 - 5:00p** • **Driving Subscriber Growth: Marketing Strategies for Fiber Expansion**  
Carriers have received grants to build fiber to new communities, but what comes next? **Tammy Wellbrock, Nex-Tech** will help you discover how to effectively launch fiber in new markets with essential strategies focused on story-sharing, community engagement, and adapting to a competitive landscape. Gain insights into researching competitors, leveraging community ties, and developing clear communication with stakeholders. Tammy will also cover actionable tactics like ROI measurement, multi-channel marketing, and performance tracking. This presentation equips you with the tools to drive awareness, attract new subscribers, and achieve measurable outcomes for your fiber build projects.
- 5:00p** **ADJOURN GENERAL SESSION III** (*Dinner on your own*)
- 5:00 - 5:45p** **WTA Associate Membership Committee Meeting**  
*Emerald Ballroom Foyer*

## **WEDNESDAY | APRIL 16, 2025**

- 7:00 - 10:30a** **WTA Registration**  
*Emerald Registration Desk*
- 7:00 - 11:00a** **Table-Top Exhibits | Breaks**  
*Emerald Ballroom Foyer*
- 7:00 - 8:00a** **Tribal Affairs Committee Breakfast Meeting**  
*Emerald Ballroom AB*
- 8:00 - 12:00p** **GENERAL SESSION IV**  
*Emerald Ballroom CDE*



**8:00 - 9:00a • Access Aggregation: The Intelligent Middle Mile**  
Evolving broadband architectures are providing new paths to financial sustainability and success. With advanced, rapid-decision protocols and new coherent optical routing products, it's now possible to significantly reduce or eliminate some Capex costs and improve your Opex outlook. **Jack Breeding, Ribbon Communications** will discuss how important fiber topology, access aggregation, and a smart middle-mile are the keys to positive broadband growth.

**9:00 - 9:45a • Navigating the Tax Landscape: Insights for Telecommunications Executives**  
**Ryan Johnson, Aldrich Advisors** will provide telecommunications executives with strategic insights into potential and upcoming tax law changes, the nuances of grant taxation, and other emerging tax topics relevant to the industry.

**9:45 - 10:15a Morning Coffee Break | Table-Top Exhibits**  
*Sponsored by: CostQuest*  
*Emerald Ballroom Foyer*

**10:15 - 11:00a • Future-Proofing Your Funding: A Proactive Approach to Rural Broadband Grant Compliance**  
With increased Congressional oversight of broadband funding programs, ensuring rigorous grant compliance is more critical than ever for rural providers. **Jennifer Holtz, JSI** will equip you with the knowledge and strategies to protect your broadband investments and navigate the complexities of grant management in a climate of heightened scrutiny. The session will go beyond the basics to explore risk mitigation, agency-specific compliance strategies, proactive audit preparedness, and how to avoid pitfalls in grant compliance. She will provide actionable ideas for building a culture of compliance that protects your investment in your grant award.

**11:00 - 11:45a • New Revenue Opportunities from Branded Calling**  
Branded Calling, the ability for an enterprise to have their Caller Name, Logo and Call Reason displayed on the called party's handset, has been available with proprietary solutions for several years. Demand for these proprietary Branded Calling solutions has been strong, and enterprises are paying between 3 and 12 cents per call for branded calling! Now a standards-based solution that leverages SHAKEN technology makes this service a new revenue opportunity for telephone service providers. A trust ecosystem enables all service providers to sell Branded Calling directly to their enterprise customers. In addition, service providers will also be paid when they display a branded caller ID to their subscribers. **Donald St. Denis, TransNexus** will explain the technology, commercial details of Branded Calling, and how service providers can profit from this new service opportunity.

**11:45a - 12p • Closing & WTA Foundation Raffle Winners Announced - Adjourn WTA Spring Educational Forum**

*Join us October 5-8, 2025, for WTA's Fall Educational Forum: "Waves of Opportunity" in Lihue, HI*

**12:30 - 3:00p WTA Board of Directors Meeting and Luncheon**  
*Emerald Ballroom AB*



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



### *How do I get wireless Internet access in the General Sessions?*

**STEP 1:** Turn on Wi-Fi access on your device

**STEP 2:** Select wireless network “HSB\_Conf network”

**STEP 3:** Enter the User ID: **WTA25** and Password: **NCSC**

*WiFi Sponsor:*



**National Cooperative  
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*RTFC Is Now NCSC, Your Broadband Financing Source*



### *How to download the APP for the WTA Spring Meeting?*

» **Search for the App:** Open your device’s **App Store** (for iOS) or **Google Play Store** (for Android). In the search bar, type **WTA Events**. Our app should be the first result.

» **Download the App:** Once you’ve found the app, tap **Download** or **Install**. The app will automatically begin downloading to your device.

» **Log In Using Your Registration Email:** After the app has finished downloading, open it. Use the **email address** you provided during your event registration as your login credentials.

» **Need Assistance?** If you have any questions or need help with the app, please contact **Taylor Myers** ([taylor@w-t-a.org](mailto:taylor@w-t-a.org)) for support.

*APP Sponsor:*



### *What is the dress code for the WTA Spring Meeting?*

**NO SUITS!** Resort or business casual is the recommended attire. Attendees are encouraged to bring a jacket for their comfort.

### *I forgot my name tag in my hotel room. Can I or my guest attend the events without it?*

Name tags are **REQUIRED** for admittance to all WTA events. If you don’t have your badge at an event, you will be turned away. Spouses/guests must be registered as a social registration to attend any WTA function. Certain events also require tickets for admission. Tickets are included in all Full and Social registration packets. Social registration can be purchased at the Registration Desk.

### *What are the dates/locations for future WTA Meetings?*

**2025 Fall Educational Forum** | October 5-8, 2025 | Kauai, HI

**2026 Spring Educational Forum** | April 12-15, 2026 | New Orleans, LA

**2026 Fall Educational Forum** | October 4-7, 2026 | Sonoma, CA



**WTA HEADQUARTERS:** PO Box 7207, Helena, MT 59604 | 406.443.6377 | [www.w-t-a.org](http://www.w-t-a.org)

**DC OFFICE:** 400 Seventh Street, NW, Suite 406, Washington, DC 20004 | 202.548.0202



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