



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kelly Worthington
(406) 443-6377, kelly@w-t-a.org

WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband Elects New President, Officers, and Directors

HELENA, MT – (October 15, 2025) – WTA – Advocates for Rural Broadband is pleased to announce the election of its new officers for the coming two years: **Matt Johnson**, VP, Government Policy, Shawnee Communications (IL) as President; **Kent Schimke** CEO/GM of Dickey Rural Networks (ND) as Vice-President; **Jason Williams**, CEO, Blackfoot Communications (MT), as Secretary-Treasurer; and **Pat McElroy**, CEO/GM, Northeast Nebraska Telephone Co. (NE) as Past President.

Additionally, **Larry Jones**, Chickasaw Telephone Co. (OK); **Kristi Lee**, Valley TeleCom Group (AZ); **Daniel Meszler**, Tularosa Communications (NM); **Jimmy Todd**, Nex-Tech (KS); **Rick Vitzthum**, Tenino Telephone Co. (WA); and **Eric Votaw**, Varcomm (CA) were elected to serve on the Executive Committee.

“I’m grateful for this opportunity to lead this fantastic organization for the next two years,” said Johnson.” As WTA begins its next twenty years I’m looking forward to building on the efforts of my predecessors and working on behalf of the industry to advance the goals of universal broadband service to Americans living in rural areas. I appreciate the WTA Board of Directors putting their trust in me.”

The WTA membership elected the following members who will serve three-year terms on the Board of Directors:

David Adams, Green Hills Communications (MO); **Lennie Blakeslee**, CoBank (Associate); **Janet Britton**, REV (LA); **Volodymyr “V” Chornodolsky**, Nokia (Associate); **Sara Cole**, TDS (OR); **Kristi Lee**, Valley TeleCom Group (AZ); **Pat McElroy**, Northeast Nebraska Telephone Co. (NE); **Kent Schimke**, Dickey Rural Networks (ND); and **Rick Vitzthum**, Tenino Telephone Co. (WA).

###

WTA - Advocates for Rural Broadband represents nearly 400 small, rural telecommunications carriers providing voice, broadband and video-related services in the United States. WTA’s members serve some of the most rural and hard-to-serve communities in the country and are on the forefront of bringing 21st Century telecommunications services to rural America. To learn more about WTA, visit www.w-t-a.org.