

# Welcome to (Virtual) Fiber Connect!

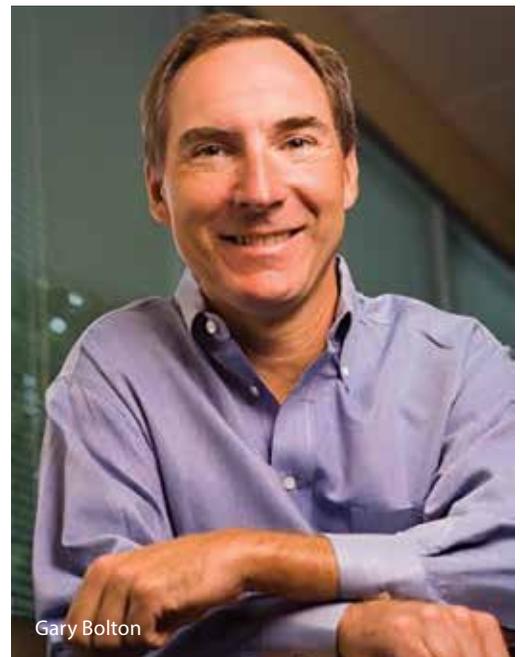
This year's event is our best ever – 30 sessions with more than 100 of the industry's top experts plus plenty of opportunities to network and engage.

By Gary Bolton / *Fiber Broadband Association*

I am honored to address the Fiber Broadband Association (FBA) at my first Fiber Connect as the organization's new president and CEO. I am no stranger to FBA – over the past few years, I have served on the board and a number of committees, two terms as treasurer and, most recently, as vice chair of the board – experiences that enabled me to hit the ground running.

Fiber Connect is virtual this year, but rest assured that the show, which runs December 14–16, will be unlike any virtual event that you have attended this year. We have our best program ever – with more than 100 of the industry's top experts and influencers covering 30 different sessions, and our virtual platform will offer a range of networking and engagement opportunities designed to enable attendees to connect with our members, speakers, exhibitors and each other. I'm particularly eager for all attendees to hear from FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr on Tuesday morning because the regulatory landscape is about to make a dramatic shift with the new administration.

As the \$16 billion Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) auction clock continues to click down, a new wave of public and private capex fiber investment will help fuel economic development and a return to growth. As part of this wave, we are seeing the emergence of community broadband providers – from electric



Gary Bolton

utility co-ops and municipalities to developers and established operators – that will greatly benefit from our Fiber Starter Kit track.

Whether you're looking to deploy a new network, seeking strategies to build your customer base or tools to make deployment more affordable, or looking for the opportunity to learn from industry leaders as they explore the future of fiber, we've got you covered. We

remain committed to providing the best resources and information to FBA members so they can build the networks that have proven crucial in keeping everyone connected.

Since joining the FBA, I have met with committee chairs and a number of key stakeholders to assess where we collectively need to place our focus and priorities going forward.

Here are a few things you can expect from FBA in the coming months:

- **Fiber broadband** – Meetings with the FBA's Public Officials Working Group confirmed that a key challenge broadband proponents face is the confusion over the definition of broadband. It is clear that we need to educate the public and make it easier for public officials and all stakeholders to advance fiber deployment in their communities. As a result, we will launch a **"Fiber Broadband – if It's Not Fiber, It's Not Broadband"** campaign. The goal is to firmly establish fiber broadband as the gold standard and to provide a durable and sustainable definition of broadband that addresses every dimension, not just speed. The umbrella campaign will support sub-campaigns, such as 5G Is Fiber.
- **Advocacy in Washington and beyond** – We are ramping up our advocacy at the federal, state and local levels, driving awareness, investment and funding to advance our goal of accelerating fiber deployment. Our timing is critical as we transition to a new administration and work to keep fiber broadband attainable for all communities.
- **Research to support your work** – FBA will continue to invest in conducting timely, in-depth research that illustrates the benefits of fiber broadband to all key stakeholders, including Congress, the FCC, and your customers. Keep an eye out for our annual State of Fiber report this month, which shares the latest deployment numbers for North America.

- **Education on topics you care about** – Education is a cornerstone of our organization, and we will continue to inform and support you and your colleagues. We will continue to offer educational opportunities, from our Fiber Starter Kit to our ongoing Fiber for Breakfast virtual events each Wednesday morning at 10 a.m. EST, where we debate and discuss the hot topics in the industry.
- **Flexibility in the face of the pandemic** – With so many people working and learning from home, COVID-19 has laid bare the need for everyone to have high-speed, high-throughput fiber broadband to the home. We at FBA will share this message and support our members through this tough time. Whether we meet in person or virtually, we will continue to foster a community of fiber professionals.

I plan to continue spending the next few months listening to you and hearing what your companies need as we chart the next phase of our growth, invest in needed resources, and support our members as they look to take fiber further. I look forward to connecting with you and growing this great organization.

From me and everyone at the Fiber Broadband Association – enjoy virtual Fiber Connect 2020! ❖

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*Gary Bolton is president and CEO of the Fiber Broadband Association.*

## Ready Solutions for Rapid FTTX Deployment



### OHC Outdoor Fiber Hub Cabinets

Flexible fiber distribution from a compact pad, pole or wall mount cabinet. Four sizes for up to 288, 432, 576 or 864 subscribers; with separate front/splice and rear/distribution compartments



### FSDC Fiber Sealed Drop Closure

FSDC series closures are fully-sealed and may be strand, pole, pedestal or vault mounted. Built-in adapters support up to 16 connectorized drops, with 2 internal splice trays for up to 48 splices



### BDO Fiber Distribution Pedestals

Non-metallic fiber splice pedestals for both greenfield and brownfield FTTP, with a variety of sizes supporting 48 to 576 fibers and fiber-only or copper/fiber splice points

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