

After Hurricane Dorian Devastation, CenturyLink Gets Creative to Help Ocracoke Island Students Go Back Online

Technicians install tower-mounted 1-gigabit wireless connection to restore the next generation's digital experience

RALEIGH, N.C., Nov. 12, 2019 – Through good teamwork, long days and outside-the-box thinking, CenturyLink technicians have deployed an innovative solution to reconnect students on Ocracoke Island, North Carolina, to the digital world following the devastation of Hurricane Dorian.

Once the powerful storm subsided in late September, the Ocracoke Island School was found to have sustained substantial damage, so students were relocated to temporary locations. Among the challenges they and their teachers faced at one of the locations was a lack of adequate bandwidth to work online – a crucial component of their learning.

A team from CenturyLink, the global networking and technology company that serves the island, investigated every possible solution to upgrade the internet connections at the temporary school location, which in normal times is the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teachers (NCCAT). Due to the island's unique right-of-way structure and other provisioning complexities, laying new fiber to the NCCAT was not an option. Other solutions were deemed unfeasible as well.

Not ones to give up, the CenturyLink team soon devised a unique solution – wireless internet connectivity, beamed to the NCCAT from a CenturyLink tower on the island. Once the wireless solution was agreed upon, a CenturyLink tower installation team in Florida put its work there on hold and made a special trip to Ocracoke to install the new system.

Completed Nov. 5, the tower-mounted wireless system can provide up to a 1-gigabit circuit to the temporary school location, ensuring that students are now well connected to the digital world.

"This project shows what CenturyLink is all about," said Steve Brewer, the company's director of state regulatory and legislative affairs for North Carolina. "We love a challenge, and great teamwork makes us great problem solvers. Most importantly, we wanted to help these students continue their learning so they could take another step back toward a normal life."

An additional benefit of the new wireless connection is that employees of the NCCAT will continue to use it after the students return to their renovated school.

“We are enormously grateful to CenturyLink – and especially the technicians who came here from out of state – for providing the bandwidth necessary to support our students’ use of the internet,” said State Representative Bobby Hanig. “We’ve all been through a lot since the hurricane, and any return to normalcy is greatly appreciated.”

About CenturyLink

CenturyLink (NYSE: CTL) is a technology leader delivering hybrid networking, cloud connectivity, and security solutions to customers around the world. Through its extensive global fiber network, CenturyLink provides secure and reliable services to meet the growing digital demands of businesses and consumers. CenturyLink strives to be the trusted connection to the networked world and is focused on delivering technology that enhances the customer experience. Learn more at <http://news.centurylink.com/>.

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