



# Commonwealth's Tech Leaders Honored at Annual Tech Day

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*Annual Tech Day honors students, businesses, schools, and organizations expanding broadband use*

Frankfort, KY— [ConnectKentucky](http://ConnectKentucky.com) Tuesday honored individuals and organizations using broadband in innovative ways at its 2012 Tech Day at The George and Ellen Rieveschl Digiitorium in Griffin Hall at Northern Kentucky University.

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual Tech Day was an opportunity to better understand and promote the benefits of broadband technology in our government, schools, businesses, communities, and homes, and to hear from experts on the latest technology trends. As part of Tech Day, an awards presentation recognized businesses, students, educational institutions, and government agencies that are making a difference in advancing broadband technologies in the Commonwealth.

The 2012 Tech Day Award categories and winners are:

- **Small Business Technology Award, Kentucky Teleworks and the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program.** Kentucky Teleworks has leveraged the use of broadband to create hundreds of jobs this year, allowing Kentuckians across the Commonwealth to work from a home-based office. This has led to partnerships with telework-friendly companies seeking to invest in human capital instead of fiscal infrastructure, thus positioning Kentucky, especially rural parts of the state, to be on a level playing field for jobs.

- **New and Emerging Business Technology Award, Gamigen, Newport, Ky.** Gamigen is a Kentucky-based software development startup company creating 3D simulation products geared towards the health, oil and gas, mining, academic, manufacturing, and public safety industries. The company specializes in the “gamification” of business and training software, utilizing broadband-based sessions to allow people to “learn by doing” in a virtual world. Its goal is to use game engine technology to create extremely effective simulations which illustrate inherently complicated and/or dangerous subjects.
- **Postsecondary Student Technology Award, Trevor Schmitz, Northern Kentucky University.** Trevor Schmitz is a technology student at Northern Kentucky University. David Hirsch, program director for the Center for Applied Informatics at Northern Kentucky University's College of Informatics, nominated Trevor for “his involvement in an open source initiative. His mission was to transform a commercial learning management system (LMS) to an open source framework. He analyzed the code and technologies, worked with original developers, and ultimately delivered the system as a packaged, open-source LMS framework. This web-based solution utilizes broadband to provide a no-cost LMS solution to educational organizations that would not have been able to make a large investment in an LMS system.”
- **School District Technology Award, Marion County Public Schools.** Marion County Public Schools is leading a technology revolution in its county and the commonwealth. As part of the school system’s Whiteboard and Wireless Initiative, it supported broadband efforts around each of its schools which lead to support from the Fiscal Court for classroom equipment, use of federal EduJobs funding for an instructional technology specialist, and recent movement to a NOOK initiative at Marion County High School. Ultimately, the efforts of the Marion County Public Schools have furthered community understanding of connectivity needs for schools and the community.
- **Postsecondary Institution Technology Award, Department of Chemistry, Eastern Kentucky University.** Over the last two years, Eastern Kentucky University's Department of Chemistry has implemented technology into the department’s curriculum and operations. The new technologies have had a positive impact on student learning and created a more positive attitude among students, faculty, and staff. The department teaches approximately 2,500 students per semester in both chemistry lecture and laboratory, and the technology has introduced a new passion for teaching and learning which has lead them to adopt many broadband technologies to enhance learning as well as provide students with an improved educational experience. During the recent

move to a new science building, the Chemistry Department worked closely with the university's IT department to implement many custom systems.

- **Government Leadership in Technology Award, Kentucky Educational Television.** Kentucky Educational Television provides equity of access to high-quality, digital media including the Virtual Physics Labs. The Virtual Physics Labs include 18 pieces of online lab apparatus programmed according to the laws of physics for use in experiments that simulate and extend what a student is able to do in a real-life lab.

“The innovative ways these award winners are using broadband is helping Kentucky stay at the leading edge of the digital age, and improving the commonwealth's economy and quality of life in myriad ways,” said ConnectKentucky Executive Director Rene True.

Among those attending and speaking at the event were **Brian Mefford**, Chairman of the Board, Connected Nation; **David Couch**, Associate Commissioner of Knowledge, Information & Data Services, Kentucky Department of Education; **Al Lind**, Vice President for Technology and eLearning, Council on Postsecondary Education; **Nancy Carpenter**, Sr. Director of Education, Kentucky Educational Television; **Brian Kiser**, Executive Director, Commonwealth Office of Broadband Outreach & Development; **Dr. Julia Roberts**, Director for Center for Gifted Studies, Western Kentucky University; **Hunter Bates**, President & General Counsel, Bates Capitol Group; **Phillip Brown**, Director of Government Affairs and Advocacy, Connected Nation; **Dean Kevin Kirby**, College of Informatics, Northern Kentucky University.

**Photo caption: Kentucky's leaders in innovative uses of broadband were honored by ConnectKentucky Tuesday during the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Tech Day, held at The George and Ellen Rieveschl Digitorium in Griffin Hall at Northern Kentucky University.**

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**About ConnectKentucky:** ConnectKentucky, a subsidiary of the national non-profit [Connected Nation](#), is leading the way into a new economy for Kentuckians. As an independent technology-based economic development organization, ConnectKentucky works to ensure that Kentucky remains the place of choice to live, work, and raise a family. ConnectKentucky is an alliance of technology-minded businesses, government entities, and universities working together to accelerate technology in the Commonwealth.