

**Goodwill & Spokane Mayor Condon to Join Comcast to Help Bridge the Digital Divide**  
**Friday, October 04, 2019 02:00:00 PM (GMT)**

*Company Announces Internet Essentials Program Has Connected More Than Eight Million People Nationwide, Including Nearly 340,000 in Washington State and Nearly 35,000 Across Spokane County*

*Comcast Executive Participates in Series of Local Events and Unveils New State-of-The-Art Digital Classroom*

Spokane Mayor David Condon and Spokane Goodwill will join Comcast's Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer, David L. Cohen, at a number of events today to announce the largest eligibility expansion of [Internet Essentials](#) in Washington state. The program, which is the nation's largest, most comprehensive, and most successful low-income broadband adoption initiative, will now be available to double the number of eligible low-income households, including those with people with disabilities and seniors.

Since 2011, more than 8 million low-income Americans have been connected to the Internet at home through the Internet Essentials program, 90 percent of whom were not connected to the Internet at home until they signed up through the program. This includes nearly 340,000 residents across the state of Washington. Nearly 35,000 low-income individuals also have been connected in Spokane County.

"This expansion is the culmination of an audacious goal we set eight years ago, which was to meaningfully and significantly close the digital divide for low-income Americans," said David L. Cohen, Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer of Comcast NBCUniversal. "The Internet is arguably the most important technological innovation in history, and it is unacceptable that we live in a country where millions of families and individuals are missing out on this life-changing resource. Whether the Internet is used for students to do their homework, adults to look for and apply for new jobs, seniors to keep in touch with friends and family, or veterans to access their well-deserved benefits or medical assistance, it is absolutely essential to be connected in our modern, digital age."

This morning, Comcast hosted an event at Goodwill, with U.S. Paralympic Gold Medalist and Purple Heart Recipient Rico Roman, to unveil a new state-of-the-art interactive digital classroom. This special computer lab will facilitate digital literacy training for low-income people with disabilities, helping to ameliorate the major barrier to broadband adoption – a lack of digital skills. The vast majority of Goodwill's program participants have some level of disability, are low-income, and many served in the military. The new digital classroom is furnished with assistive technology to help different disabled individuals' needs. For example, it features adjustable tables on hydraulics and interactive learning and digital tools. At the event, Comcast also presented a grant to the organization and surprised Goodwill program participants with 50 laptops and six months of complimentary Internet Essentials service.

"We are thankful for the investment Comcast is making to bring to life Goodwill's vision for a digital classroom that provides training in an inclusive and accessible environment to our community," said Clark Brekke, President and CEO of Goodwill Industries of the Inland Northwest. "As technology continues to advance and become a daily part of so many industries, more people need the skills to thrive in this employment environment. It is through partners like Comcast that our communities will be able to bridge the digital gap."

In the afternoon, Comcast brought together local business and civic leaders for an event to talk about how the community can collaborate to connect more low-income families and individuals with disabilities to the Internet. Additionally, Cohen recognized Mayor Condon's multi-year commitment as an Internet Essentials Champion, as he closes his final term. In addition, Cohen announced a donation of 50 laptop computers and complimentary Internet Essentials service for Family Promise, one of the local nonprofits the Mayor championed.

"Comcast has been a tremendous partner to the city, and we applaud its work to make the Internet more affordable and accessible throughout Spokane," said Mayor Condon. "Programs like Internet Essentials can have a tremendous impact on our community, and are critical for helping connect our most vulnerable citizens to the Internet and other technology resources, allowing them to succeed in school, their careers,

and in life."

Internet Essentials has an integrated, wrap-around design that addresses each of the three major barriers to broadband adoption that research has identified. These include: a lack of digital literacy skills, lack of awareness of the relevance of the Internet to everyday life needs, and fear of the Internet; the lack of a computer; and cost of internet service. The program is structured as a partnership between Comcast and tens of thousands of school districts, libraries, elected officials, and nonprofit community partners. For more information, or to apply for the program in seven different languages, please visit [www.internetessentials.com](http://www.internetessentials.com) or call 1-855-846-8376. Spanish-only speakers can also call 1-855-765-6995.

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