Dear Friends of MUW,

If you are reading this newsletter, you likely have access to the internet. But for thousands in our region, internet access remains unavailable. This became a crucial issue during the pandemic: some kids could not go to school, people struggled to work at home, isolation among many segments of the population became rampant.

The good news is that there is something being done to increase broadband access to those who need it most.

An article in the Keene Sentinel recently said Covid-19 forced some local communities to increase high-speed internet access to all, even those in the most remote locations. One of those towns is Winchester. Missy Calderwood, Executive Director of All Children Cared for, Educated, Supported and Successful (ACCESS) in Winchester said some of her children struggled in school because of a slow internet connection. She said,

“I do know families struggled with multiple kids trying to use internet at the same time to get remote work done but internet would cut out or go slow.”

Cheshire County Administrator Chris Coates said the county is committed to making sure everyone has access to high-speed internet.

“At the end of the day,” he said, “we want all 22 towns, and the City of Keene, to be able to have access.”

In our recent Community Voices Series, a cross-sector group of
community members came together to identify needs that came about during the pandemic. Access to broadband was one of the issues they identified. Our funding cycle for Covid-19 Recovery Funds, which closed yesterday, had broadband access as a priority and we look forward to considering funding agencies that come up with creative ways of overcoming this problem.

We are proud to be able to be a part of the solution! We want everyone in our region to be able to work, learn, and even go to doctor’s appointments with the ease at which you opened this newsletter.

Sincerely,

Liz LaRose, President

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