

## COMMUNITY and COLLEGE PARTNERS PROGRAM (C2P2)

**Background:** Rural and other historically underserved communities need resources to improve their economic viability, health, environmental conditions, and overall quality of life. However, while there are many local, state and federal resources available to these communities, they often lack the technical knowledge and skills needed to go after those resources. The C2P2 program is a non-profit that was created to assist these communities to access much needed resources and achieving the improvements to the health of their respective communities. C2P2 enlists colleges, universities and other partners with appropriate programs to assist these underserved communities with vital technical support through student internships, capstone projects, and other pro bono support, in which students work on a range of plans and projects that help these communities. The C2P2 program provides practical experience for participating students in their areas of academic study, and the students generally receive academic credit for their efforts. The communities receive these vital services at no cost to them, and the students provide their services on the value of the experiential learning opportunity provided to the them.

**Status:** C2P2 is based on a program created with the federal government, and beginning from nothing, reached a point where there were 73 schools in 20 states engaged in the program, and supports 65 communities with various projects. The program provided over \$41, 364,960 worth of support to communities at an administrative cost of only \$4,094,876. Relationships were established with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, the largest Hispanic University in the country, majority schools supporting minority communities, community colleges, and Native American colleges serving tribal communities. The program also supported disaster recovery efforts in North Carolina; Louisiana, Puerto Rico, and Florida. The program partnered with the US Department of Education to partner the Agency's federal student work-study efforts with the program to ensure stipends were provided to poor college students to allow them the opportunity to participate in the program. The program also collaborated with the US Department of Commerce to teach colleges how to develop broadband plans for poor communities to ensure their economic, health and education needs both current and future are a part of this vital infrastructure issue.

The federal government subsequently reduced the geographic area and range of issues that were addressed by the program, and a nonprofit (C2P2) has been created to continue the work as it's creator originally envisioned it. C2P2 work has already begun with five projects in Georgia, to include addresses water and sewage infrastructure issues, and a comprehensive economic development plan; three in Southern Louisiana to support tribal communities by a loss of land due to climate change; two in Alabama and one in North Carolina to help develop broadband plans for poor communities; one in Philadelphia to help develop an alternative energy design for an urban farm; a study with Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia to look at the impact the lack of broadband has on COVID-19 death rates and other health factors in rural Georgia; with others in the planning stages to include Alaska.

**Future Outlook:** C2P2 Program is developing the resources and staff to expand the program across the United States, and eventually internationally. We plan to expand our partnerships to promote support for green and energy efficient projects to reduce energy costs, support foundational work to address broadband needs in poor communities, and develop ways to address health and economic development issues in appropriately targeted communities.

For more information, please contact: Michael W. Burns, CEO/Executive Director, Community College Partners Program (C2P2) at [burnsmichaelwayne@gmail.com](mailto:burnsmichaelwayne@gmail.com) or 678-571-2170.