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Fifteen Communities Advance in America's Best Communities \$10M Prize Competition

Sponsored by Frontier Communications, DISH Network, CoBank and The Weather Channel, America's Best Communities is investing in new solutions to revitalize rural and suburban America

NORWALK, Conn., Jan. 13, 2016 – Celebrations are erupting in 15 communities across the country as residents learn their hometowns are semi-finalists in the America's Best Communities competition and will continue to compete for the first place prize of \$3 million.

More than 350 communities nationwide entered the competition after its launch in 2014, and 50 were selected as quarterfinalists in April 2015. Each of the 50 was awarded \$50,000 in seed money to develop a Community Revitalization Plan and were paired with a major Corporation that served as a strategic advisor as part of the competition's Adopt-a-Community Program. From this class of 50 quarterfinalist communities, the fifteen with the best plans — those with the most innovative ideas being effectively executed — were named semifinalists today.

The America's Best Communities semifinalists are: Lake Havasu City, Arizona; Charleston, West Virginia; Statesboro, Georgia; Valley County/Meadows Valley, Idaho; Chisago Lakes Area, Minnesota; Huntington, West Virginia; Portsmouth, Ohio; DeKalb, Illinois; Fort Dodge, Iowa; Darrington/Arlington, Washington; Valparaiso, Indiana; Tualatin, Oregon; Wenatchee/East Wenatchee, Washington; Madison, Indiana; and Angola/Fremont, Indiana.

Sponsored by Frontier Communications, DISH Network, CoBank and The Weather Channel, the America's Best Communities competition has dedicated \$10 million in prizes and other support to spark economic revitalization in small towns and rural communities across the country. The fifteen communities now advancing into the semifinals have crafted innovative solutions designed to transform their local economies and improve the lives and livelihoods of their citizens.

"America's Best Communities has inspired towns and cities to come together in ways we never thought possible. People from all walks of life were united by this challenge to reimagine their future and reinvigorate their community. Already it has stimulated positive change and economic progress," said **Frontier Communications Executive Chairman Maggie Wilderotter**. "Great communities don't just happen. They are the result of people working together for the common good."

All 15 semifinalist communities will attend the America's Best Communities Summit April 26-27 in Durham, North Carolina, where they will present their proposals to a panel of expert judges and executives from the sponsoring companies and compete for additional financial support.

At the end of the summit, eight communities will be named finalists and awarded \$100,000 to bring their plans to life.

In April 2017, the top three communities making the largest impact and showing the greatest potential for achieving sustainable revitalization will be selected as the grand prize winners. The first place community will receive \$3 million, the second place community \$2 million, and \$1 million for third.

“One in six of us calls Rural America home. These communities are the backbone of our country, but they’ve suffered from a host of challenges, from poverty to drug abuse,” said **Vince Gill**, spokesperson for the competition and country music legend. “America's Best Communities has inspired new hope in rural America by providing a hand up, not a handout. It’s helping our neighbors in small communities lift themselves up by their bootstraps and live their own American dream.”

To explore the communities’ revitalization strategies and for additional information on the competition, please visit www.americasbestcommunities.com.

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