



For Immediate Release
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(Bristol, Va) Last week in Phoenix, Arizona, Bristol Virginia Utilities (BVU) was awarded the 2008 *Last Mile* magazine's Smart Community Award. Just two communities are chosen as "smart communities" each year – one with a population of more than 200,000 and another with a population of less than 200,000. The award recognizes municipalities that have bridged the digital divide. Tucson, Arizona received the award for a community with a population over 200,000.

Smart Communities are judged on the criteria of enabling ubiquitous broadband access, furthering economic development, enhancing public safety and education, employing innovative solutions in network deployment and application and fostering community involvement.

Sandy Crusenberry, BVU's marketing and business development director, accepted the award on behalf of the company. Addressing the attendees at the Digital Cities Expo, Ms. Crusenberry stated, "BVU's success is attributed to our dedication to providing excellent customer service and technical support, a forward thinking management team, investment in "future-proof" infrastructure and a trusting relationship built with our customers after over 60 years of providing electric service."

As the first municipal utility in the nation to offer triple-play services over a fiber-to-the-user (FTTU) network, BVU is truly a pioneer; blazing the trail for other municipal entities across the United States. Wes Rosenbalm, BVU's president and CEO states, "Bristol leaders and the BVU Board of Directors chose to invest in important infrastructure in order to make advanced broadband more accessible and affordable to local residents and businesses and to enhance the area's economic development opportunities and its citizens' quality of life. That decision took commitment to our community's future"

BVU OptiNet currently provides telecommunication and information services to just over 8,000 households and businesses in serviceable areas of Bristol, Virginia, Washington County and Abingdon, Virginia. BVU also serves approximately 16,500 electric customers, 7,500 water customers and over 7,000 wastewater customers.

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