

## For Immediate Release

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### **CenturyLink Wins Corporate Investment & Community Impact (CiCi) Award**



(Monroe, LA) CenturyLink received national recognition for its Monroe, La. headquarters expansion, winning a 2012 Corporate Investment & Community Impact (CiCi) Award for the community impact category. Trade & Industry Development, a leading national site selection magazine, annually honors companies that have made the most notable impact on communities.

"We congratulate Glen Post and the CenturyLink family for receiving this prestigious award due to their recent corporate expansion. We are proud to have this dynamic company's headquarters located in Monroe, La.," said Mayor Jamie Mayo, City of Monroe.

The telecommunications giant announced in 2011 it would add 800 new jobs to its Monroe headquarters by 2016. These positions will be in addition to the 350-job expansion previously announced in late 2009, bringing the total to nearly 1,150 jobs in the next four years. These positions pay an average of more than \$65,000 plus benefits and should result in the creation of approximately 1,170 indirect jobs, for a total impact of nearly 1,970 new jobs. Based on this economic impact, CenturyLink will become the top economic-driver company in Northeast Louisiana and one of the top 10 economic-driver companies statewide.

"Congratulations to CenturyLink and its employees on its most recent award. Having a company such as CenturyLink headquartered in Ouachita Parish means so much to our entire region. I cannot say enough about CenturyLink, its leadership, its employees, and its vision in the telecommunications industry," praised Shane Smiley, President, Ouachita Parish Police Jury.

Prior to the 2009 announcement, CenturyLink had more than 1,820 jobs in Louisiana. Today, the company has about 1,970 employees in Louisiana. After the 1,150 job expansion, CenturyLink's Louisiana employment will have increased by more than 60 percent to approximately 2,970 direct employees.

North Louisiana Economic Partnership (NLEP) and partners such as Louisiana Economic Development (LED) have been assisting CenturyLink with company growth plans. LED provided the company with a competitive incentive package, including recruitment and training through LED FastStart™ and performance-based grants to pay for 50 percent of building or leasing additional headquarters space in

Monroe and to reimburse relocation costs. LED also provided up to 150,000 square feet of discounted space in the state-owned Accent Building in Monroe through 2015.

"CenturyLink has become one of Louisiana's most significant economic assets, and its growth potential in our state is tremendous," said LED Secretary Stephen Moret. "Thanks to the company's outstanding leadership combined with strong state, regional and local support, CenturyLink is being positioned for a very bright future in Louisiana."

NLEP's workforce marketing program, NEON, has been working for more than a year to help CenturyLink recruit qualified employees from its latest acquisitions, Embarq, Qwest and Savvis. NEON assisted the company with developing a recruiter-training program to educate recruiters about Monroe's positive attributes.

"We are very proud that CenturyLink has chosen North Louisiana to expand its corporate presence. As the third largest telecom in the nation, CenturyLink's impact on North Louisiana extends beyond just the simple economic impact of its corporate footprint. Their corporate leadership in economic development and community development has moved the region forward. Also, the prestige of having the corporate headquarters of a Fortune 500 company right here in North Louisiana changes the way the rest of the world perceives our state and region," said John Peak, immediate past NLEP Chair.

The CiCi Awards are unique in that they highlight not only the largest corporate investment projects but also recognize those projects that may not involve large investments but made the most notable impact on communities. There are a number of criteria considered for the community impact division, including the number of new jobs created, number of current jobs retained, unemployment figures, income level of the region and plant closings.

Trade & Industry Development received hundreds of applications and selected just 30 companies to receive the 7th Annual CiCi Awards — 15 in the corporate investment category and 15 in the community impact category. The only stipulation for each nomination is the project announcement had to be finalized in the previous year.

For more information about CenturyLink, visit [www.centurylink.com](http://www.centurylink.com).

**About North Louisiana Economic Partnership:**

NLEP is a non-profit economic development marketing organization, promoting 14 parishes in North Louisiana as a desirable and profitable business location. The NLEP and its many partners work with both existing companies and prospective employers to encourage incremental capital investment and job creation as a way to build a strong and thriving economy.