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## America's Best Communities Prize Competition Welcomes Vince Gill

**Multi GRAMMY® Award Winner Joins Frontier Communications, DISH Network and CoBank to Celebrate and Support Rural America**

**Communities across the country are pursuing America's Best Communities Prize to win up to \$3 million for economic revitalization**

NASHVILLE, Tenn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Multi GRAMMY® Award Winner Vince Gill took the stage with the CEOs of Frontier Communications, DISH Network Corp. and CoBank at the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville, Tenn. to announce he's joining the America's Best Communities (ABC) partnership to revitalize small towns and cities across America.



L-R, Vince Gill; Joe Clayton (DISH); Maggie Wilderotter (Frontier) and Robert Engel (CoBank)



America's Best Communities \$10 million prize competition will reward communities with the best business plans for economic development and improved quality of life. The winners will also share best practices and great ideas for innovative growth among all the communities that participate in the competition.

In an event celebrating the strength and vitality of rural America - on a stage where he has often celebrated rural America in song - Vince Gill spoke from his heart to a crowd holding aloft rally signs naming their communities and others registered for the competition, while behind him flashed photos of small cities and towns that are eagerly participating in the competition.

"There's a lot of small town community in me. I have a small town mentality," Vince Gill told the crowd, for whom the day marked a ceremonial kickoff for their efforts. "This is where I live and I want to make it better, I want to be part of a team focused on supporting the backbone of America."

Vince, a native of Norman, Okla., spoke of his roots and the importance of lending a hand to people, and not a hand out. The ABC competition can do that, he said, and shine a light on the importance of rural America for us all.

America's Best Communities has already drawn more than 200 participating communities across the 27 states served by Frontier Communications. Fifty quarter-finalists will be selected in April, 2015 and awarded \$50,000 in development funds for their revitalization proposals. At the end of the competition in April 2017, the top three applicants will share \$6 million in prize money - \$3 million to the winner, \$2 million for second place and \$1 million for third place - money to be used to continue to implement their improvement plans.

Maggie Wilderotter, Chairman and CEO of Frontier Communications, said, "As the largest broadband communications company focused on rural America, we want to be a catalyst for growth in our towns and cities. We believe that investments in these locations will have a multiplier effect as communities embrace opportunities for revitalization. Whether it is upgrading existing businesses in the area or new startups, a focus on local businesses will be critical to sustained growth. We also will look for innovative ideas on how each community will come



together to socialize and interact as a measurement of success."

America sends billions overseas in foreign aid, she noted, but we need to think domestically in helping rural small towns and cities.

Conceived by Frontier Communications and co-sponsored with DISH Network and CoBank, America's Best Communities Prize is a competition that will fund economic development opportunities for the winners and share best practices and great ideas for progress among all the communities that enter.

"Our nation depends on a strong rural America," said CoBank CEO Robert B. Engel. "Rural communities need continuous investment and support in order to ensure they remain healthy and can continue to play a vital role in the broader economy. That's why we are so excited to support the ABC campaign. We look forward to seeing the proposals generated by the ABC competition, and the tangible benefits it will deliver to all communities who decide to participate.

Rural America is important not just to our own country, but to the world, especially for the world's food supply, and CoBank is there to help, Mr. Engel said.

"DISH is a proud co-sponsor of America's Best Communities because the initiative supports entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity - ideals reflective of our roots," said DISH Network President and CEO Joseph P. Clayton. "Our expectation is that America's Best Communities will help provide the right motivation, resources and rewards to support those working to make their communities the best they can be."

Innovate new ideas come from rural America, Mr. Clayton said.

All entrants will win access to each other's ideas and plans to use in their own future economic development efforts. The deadline for entry is March 25, 2015.



## About Vince Gill

One of the most popular singers in modern country music, Vince Gill is famous for his top-notch songwriting, world-class guitar playing and warm, soaring tenor, all wrapped up in a quick and easy wit. Since 1990, Gill has won 20 GRAMMY Awards and 18 Country Music Association Awards. The CMA just honored Gill with its prestigious Irving Waugh Award of Excellence which is awarded to an individual who is "the originator and caretaker of demonstrated ideas and actions that have dramatically broadened and improved country music's influence." Gill was also recently presented the BMI Icon Award. The Academy of Country Music has conferred eight awards on Gill. Gill is a member of the Country Music Hall of Fame and the Grand Ole Opry. He is a member of the four-time Grammy-nominated band The Time Jumpers. Visit [www.vincegill.com](http://www.vincegill.com).

## About FRONTIER COMMUNICATIONS

Frontier Communications Corporation (NASDAQ: FTR) offers broadband, voice, video, wireless Internet data access, data security solutions, bundled offerings, specialized bundles for residential customers, small businesses and home offices and advanced communications for medium and large businesses in 28 states. Frontier's approximately 17,000 employees are based entirely in the United States. More information is available at [www.frontier.com](http://www.frontier.com).

## About DISH

DISH Network Corp. (NASDAQ: DISH), through its subsidiaries, provides approximately 14.041 million pay-TV subscribers, as of September 30, 2014, with the highest quality programming and technology with the most choices at the best value. Subscribers enjoy a high-definition lineup with more than 200 national HD channels, the most international channels, and award-winning HD and DVR technology. DISH Network Corp. is a Fortune 250 company. Visit [www.dish.com](http://www.dish.com).

## About CoBank

CoBank is a \$102 billion cooperative bank serving vital industries across rural America. The bank provides loans, leases, export financing and other financial services to agribusinesses and rural power, water and communications providers in all 50 states. The bank also provides financial services to affiliated Farm Credit associations serving farmers, ranchers and other rural borrowers in 23 states around the country. CoBank is a member of the Farm Credit System, a nationwide



network of banks and retail lending associations chartered to support the borrowing needs of U.S. agriculture and the nation's rural economy. Visit [www.cobank.com](http://www.cobank.com).

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Source: Frontier Communications Corporation  
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