

# THE LINK DAKOTA CENTRAL

SPRING 2024  
dakotacentral.com



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## Navigating the Digital World with Dakota Central

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## Milestones Early Learning, LLC





# A letter from our General Manager

**I hope this finds you well and thriving in an ever-changing digital world. At Dakota Central, we believe that technology is not just a tool but a gateway to endless possibilities. We are committed to ensuring that you not only have access to the best broadband services but also the knowledge and support to take full advantage of all that technology can offer.**

From how we work and communicate to how we learn and entertain ourselves, technology touches every aspect of our lives. It's not just about having the latest gadgets or fastest internet speeds; it's about understanding

how technology can enrich our lives. We believe that by fostering curiosity and providing the necessary resources and guidance, we can empower you to unlock the full potential of your connections.

As we transition from what we call a "traditional" TV service to a streaming or app-based TV service, we have been offering weekly classes for TV customers. Led by one of our internet support gurus, Laura, these workshops walk you through the very basics of streaming TV (it's not scary, we promise), and how to navigate the Dakota Central TV app. We have hosted over 300 customers in classes since the beginning of the year, and almost every one of them has learned that they are already a "streamer" and they didn't even realize it!

You can find more information on our upcoming classes on page six. If you are not able to attend a class prior to switching to the new TV service, don't worry! Our support team is here to answer your questions and provide guidance as you go. If you prefer to do your own research, our website is your resource

for how-to articles and guides covering a wide range of topics, from setting up your home network to mastering productivity tools and exploring emerging technologies.

We believe that by empowering you to become proficient with the tools and resources out there, we can not only enhance your experience as our valued customers but also contribute to a more digitally inclusive community where everyone has the opportunity to learn and grow.

With a spirit of curiosity and exploration, we can discover the possibilities of what technology can do. Thank you for choosing Dakota Central as your trusted provider. We are excited to see where the future takes us, together!

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Holly Utke".

**Holly Utke**  
Chief Executive Officer/  
General Manager



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# Business Spotlight: Milestones Early Learning

**Located in Carrington, Milestones Early Learning, LLC is a testament to the power of vision, dedication, and community support. Founded by Whitney Carter, this childcare center has quickly become an integral part of Carrington's economy, offering early childhood education and care for families since its establishment in 2022.**

Whitney's journey to creating Milestones began with a deep-rooted passion for early childhood education and a commitment to addressing the pressing need for quality childcare. After teaching preschool for several years, Whitney left the public school setting to start her own business. The original Milestones location was established in Parshall, ND in 2019 as a way for her to not only fulfill a need in the community but to also raise her children while supporting her family at the same time. Upon moving to Carrington, Whitney was met with overwhelming support from the whole community and was able to bring Milestones to life in Carrington by transforming a former church into the vibrant daycare facility it is today. Reflecting on the journey of Milestones, Whitney emphasized: "Everything I do is for this beautiful community, so having the support of so many friends and even strangers means the world to me."

One of the missions of Milestones is its unwavering commitment to providing enriching experiences for children beyond traditional daycare services. With separate classrooms for each age group, they are able

to keep student to teacher ratios low. The center boasts a fully interactive art room, where children can channel their creativity and have fun. Additionally, a fenced-in playground offers ample space for outdoor play and organized sports, promoting physical activity and social development. "We will soon offer a full indoor children's gym that will also be available to the community outside of daycare hours," Whitney added.

Central to Milestones' mission in Carrington is its dedication to supporting working families by offering comprehensive childcare and preschool services. By implementing the Learning Beyond Paper Curriculum, the center seamlessly integrates preschool education into its program, alleviating the cost for parents of having to pay for both childcare and preschool.

For Whitney, the joy of running Milestones extends far beyond the day-to-day operations. Interacting with the children, witnessing their growth and development, and building meaningful connections with families are among the most rewarding aspects of her role as founder and director. Whitney expressed, "I work really hard to be a trusted adult, mentor, and friend that every child needs and to provide a safe and nurturing environment that parents can feel confident dropping their children off at every day. Being a working parent is hard, and my only hope is that I can make it a little easier."

In addition to its commitment to educational excellence, Milestones prioritizes the safety and security of its students and staff. "I love to keep my business local and give back to the community that has given so much to me, so it was a no-brainer when I learned Dakota Central offered [security systems] in addition to phone and internet services," Whitney said. With the help of Dakota Central, the center has implemented a cutting-edge security system, as well as a feature-rich phone system and a secure and hassle-free managed Wi-Fi network, providing peace of mind for families and ensuring a secure environment for all. Managed services allow Whitney to hand off the worry and maintenance required in their phone, internet, and security systems to Dakota Central and focus on providing a safe place for children to learn and grow. "My security system gives me peace of mind and allows me to monitor from my phone if I'm ever out of the office," Whitney mentioned.

As Milestones continues to evolve, its dedication to enriching the lives of children remains steadfast. With the unwavering support of the community and the visionary leadership of Whitney, Milestones serves as a shining example of the positive impact that early childhood education can have in a community, laying the foundation for a brighter future for generations to come.





The Future of  
the World  
is in  
This Room





# Company News

## Recent Events

**As always, we love getting out and about in our communities!**

Dakota Central employees and families handed out giveaways while enjoying a University of Jamestown basketball doubleheader at the Harold Newman Arena on February 24th. As this is one of our favorite events of the year, we were honored to receive the game ball!

We are gearing up for another busy summer of events in your communities, which is our favorite time of the year! Parades, fairs, races, concerts, and picnics; you name it, we'll be there! We hope to see you around; be sure to stop by and say "Hi!" if you see any of our Dakota Central team members out and about!



## Upcoming Community Classes

As we transition to a new app-based TV platform, we are offering community classes to help guide our customers through learning a new way of watching TV. In these classes you'll learn how to navigate the Dakota Central app, favorite features, and how to access other apps on your Firestick. We know that change can be hard sometimes, which is why we'll be with you every step of the way!

Visit [www.dakotacentral.com](http://www.dakotacentral.com) to view our upcoming class schedule, and call **952-1000** to reserve your spot!



# Join us for an **open house** in Jamestown!

**Wednesday, September 11**

8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

To show our appreciation for customers like you, we invite you to stop by, say hi, and grab some sweet treats and prizes!

**604 18th St SW  
Jamestown, ND 58401**



## LIFELINE SUPPORT

Lifeline is an assistance program that helps connect families and households that struggle to afford internet service. These benefits provide a discount of up to \$5.25 toward telephone service for eligible households.

Eligible households can enroll through Dakota Central or learn more at: [dakotacentral.com/lifeline-support/](https://dakotacentral.com/lifeline-support/)

You can learn more about the Lifeline benefit, including eligibility and enrollment information, by visiting [www.lifelinesupport.org](https://www.lifelinesupport.org).



# Available Grants

## 2024 Grant Program

Dakota Central Telecommunications Cooperative is a member of the Rural Development Finance Corporation (RDFC). As a result, communities in our service area are eligible to apply for a grant of up to \$3,000 for community-based projects. RDFC is making these funds available so that more people become aware of their larger loan program that funds community-based projects and non-profit entities with low-interest loans.

Eligible projects include community-owned businesses (café, grocery store, motel, other); community facilities (such as ambulance services, fire districts, recreation, hospital/clinic, community center, etc.); or community-based projects (such as school/youth projects, other) that benefit rural areas.

The grant application deadline is December 31, 2024. For grant guidelines and the application form, contact Brianne at 701-652-3184 or [bpartlow@dakotacentral.com](mailto:bpartlow@dakotacentral.com).

## 2023 RDFC Grant Recipient:

### Woodworth Community Betterment Board

RDFC recently granted \$3,000 to the Woodworth Community Betterment Board. The grant funds will be used to make improvements to the Woodworth Community Park. This spring, work will begin to add four camping spots with electrical hookups. Phase 2 projects will include the installation of cement pads, new picnic tables, rubber mulch for the playground and a public restroom remodel. These projects all depend on grant funding. Congratulations to the Woodworth Community Betterment Board!

## Foundation For Rural Service Grant Program

As part of its ongoing commitment to rural communities across the country, the Foundation for Rural Service offers aid to communities served by NTCA members through its annual Community Grant Program. These grants are designed to provide support to a variety of local efforts to build and sustain a high quality of life in rural America. The program supports projects for business, economic, and community development, education, and telecommunications applications.

### Priority is given to projects that:

- Could be fully funded by the grant maximum of \$5,000 or have at least 75% of the project currently funded.
- Technology and broadband-enabled focused projects.
- Have a long-term impact on the community and its residents.
- Promote community participation and engagement.
- Create a more sustainable rural community.

If you have a qualifying project you'd like to submit a grant application for, contact Brianne at 701-652-3184 or [bpartlow@dakotacentral.com](mailto:bpartlow@dakotacentral.com). Deadline to apply is September 1, 2024.





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# 7 Reasons you need ExperienceIQ content controls in your home



Kids average 7 hours a day on a screen<sup>1</sup>



27% of children who spend 3 or more hours daily on social media exhibit poor mental health<sup>2</sup>



50% of parents are extremely concerned about children seeing explicit content and wasting time on apps<sup>3</sup>



66% of parents think parenting is harder today because of devices and social media<sup>4</sup>



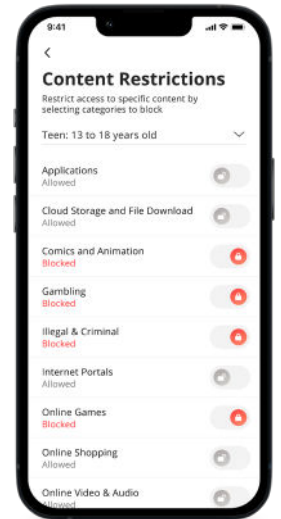
50% of parents want more control over their children's video gaming time<sup>5</sup>



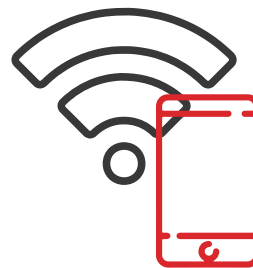
26% of US employees work from home and need to prioritize their bandwidth<sup>6</sup>



The average household has over 25 connected devices competing for bandwidth.<sup>7</sup>



## Ready to take control and steer your Wi-Fi experience?



DOWNLOAD COMMANDIQ TODAY!



<sup>1</sup>Kids average 7 hours a day on a screen

<sup>2</sup><https://influencermarketinghub.com/social-media-addiction-stats/>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/12/15/explicit-content-time-wasting-are-key-social-media-worries-for-parents-of-u-s-teens/>

<sup>4</sup>66% of parents think parenting is harder today because of devices and social media.

<sup>5</sup><https://www.theparentingdaily.co.uk/article/2022/03/14/parents-want-more-control-over-online-gaming-time>

<sup>6</sup><https://www.zippia.com/a-device/remote-work-statistics/#:~:text=26%25%20of%20U.S.%20employees%20work,U.S.%20companies%20are%20fully%20remote>

<sup>7</sup><https://techjury.net/blog/zoom-statistics/#gref>



# Straight from the Helpdesk: Email Safety Tips

There has been a mass of scam emails going around pretending to be from Dakota Central. We did not send these messages! It could be anything from your account will be de-activated, your bill is past due, update your account following a service outage, and others.

These messages will either include a link for you to click and enter your account information, or reply to the email.

DO NOT enter your account information or reply to these messages! Once you "log in," they have your password and your account can be hacked. After an account has been compromised, hackers use your account to send spam messages to gain access to other accounts, creating a snowball effect.

## What you can do:

- **Delete and disregard suspicious email messages. Or, if you think it might be legitimate, visit our website directly instead of clicking on links in the message to log into your account, to ensure you are on the correct website.**
- **If you happened to enter your information, call us right away to reset your password and secure your account**
- **If you have an old or short password it should be reset to a longer, stronger password**
- **Tell your friends and family to be careful and never click the links!**

## Example Scam Emails:

Dear Customer,

The issue has been resolved and services will return online gradually, but please be patient! It may take time for your service to be restored. Our most sincere apologies for the interruption. We appreciate your understanding!

Please [Update Your Account](#) to avoid disconnection.

If you continue to experience issues, try re-booting your equipment by unplugging it from power and plugging it back in. We apologize for the inconvenience, and appreciate your patience!

Thank you for your continued support,  
Dakota Central Support Team

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Dakota Central Telecommunications 630 5th Street North Carrington ND 58421

To: [member@service.com](mailto:member@service.com)  
Subject: Please Update Your Account Mail>>>>

  
**DAKOTA  
CENTRAL**

Dear Valid Customer,

We're letting you know that DAKOTA CENTRAL MAIL will no longer accept accounts using our old terms of service. We've noticed you might have not updated your mailbox service on your account, so we need you to update your account now.

Please kindly re-login below with your valid email and password for security reasons: Failure to do this will lead to the account deactivated.

[Re-Login Now To Update Your Mailbox](#)

Thank you for your patience through the recent e-mail account updates! Again, enjoy the added features and increased security, along with a larger e-mail inbox

Sincerely,  
Dakota Central Support Team.



# DAKOTA CENTRAL

604 18th St SW,  
Jamestown, ND 58401

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