

Lumos acquires ALLO fiber network in Joplin

BY ANDY OSTMEYER
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Lumos, based in High Point, North Carolina, announced Friday that it has completed acquisition of the fiber network being built and operated in Joplin by ALLO Fiber.

“It’s exciting,” Scott Mispagel, CEO of Lumos Fiber, said in a statement. “We look forward to welcoming customers to Lumos and

continuing the work to bring reliable, high-performance fiber connectivity to more homes and businesses across the community.”

According to the company, current ALLO customers will continue to receive service during the transition and do not need to take any action. Lumos will contact customers directly with additional information before their service transitions to Lumos near the end of 2026.

Lumos operates a fiber-optic network in 12 other Southeastern and Midwestern states, said Grace Simrall, senior director for market development for Lumos.

Allo’s arrival in Joplin was the result of a multiyear effort by the city of Joplin and a consultant it hired to bring high-speed internet service here.

Allo was awarded a contract for that in April 2024 by the City Council and a

groundbreaking was held that fall.

Allo, based in Lincoln, Nebraska, had committed to investing about \$40 million to build the system in Joplin.

In a statement Friday, the city of Joplin said it was made aware of the deal a couple weeks before it closed, and that representatives from Lumos and ALLO are scheduled to appear at the Monday night Joplin City Council meeting to provide

more information about the transition.

“The city’s investment of \$5 million from ARPA grant funds into the network infrastructure has been completed. The rest of the network buildout will be completed under the existing agreement, now managed by Lumos,” the city said in a statement.

Joplin officials sought out a fiber-optic provider after learning during the recovery

from the 2011 Joplin tornado that many parts of the city had unreliable or slow internet service. An effort to attract potential providers of faster and more reliable service across the city began in 2020 after a city-appointed steering committee of community leaders met to develop a technology plan for Joplin. Internet access was at the top of a list of priorities

SEE **ALLO**, 2A



Dr. Blair Freed holds a photo of herself and her mentor and now medical partner, Dr. Cheryl Fogarty, in Freed’s office on her first day on call.

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DOCTORS RETURN

First physicians to graduate KCU Joplin enter medical workforce

BY JOHN HACKER
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Joplin native Dr. Blair Freed worked all her life to get to where she was on Monday, Sept. 21.

It was her first day on call as a physician, specializing in obstetrics and gynecology at Mercy Hospital Joplin.

While Joplin wasn’t his hometown, Dr. Ryan Patter-

son, a Nixa native, made it his home through medical school and returned from his residency in Wisconsin in August to work as a general surgeon at Freeman Health System.

Freed and Patterson are two members of the first class to enter Kansas City University’s Farber McIntire Campus in Joplin in 2017, graduate in 2021, complete their residencies and join the workforce.

They’re also two of a number of KCU’s first graduates coming back to Joplin.

“What’s amazing is I feel like I got to be part of those



Dr. Ryan Patterson, a surgeon at the Freeman General and Vascular Surgical Group, was a graduate of the first class of doctors to come out of KCU’s Joplin campus. He recently completed his residency in Wisconsin and moved back to Joplin to practice medicine.

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SEE **DOCTORS**, 2A



Owen Cox Dance Group will present “Collective: Our Stories of Cancer” at the Cornell Complex Oct. 18.

COURTESY | CONNECT2CULTURE

‘Our stories of Cancer’ coming to Cornell Complex Oct. 18

BY MARTA CHURCHWELL
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Personal experiences of cancer that can be difficult to express through words will be explored through contemporary dance, original music and storytelling when the Owen/Cox Dance Group of Kansas City presents “Collective: Our Stories of Cancer” at the Harry M. Cornell Arts & Entertainment Complex, 212 W. Seventh St.

Presented by Connect2Culture, the production will be held at 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 18. Tickets are \$33.60 and may be reserved at <https://ci.ovationtix.com/35477/production/1277594>.

For patients undergoing cancer treatment, there will be a separate, limited audience performance at 12:30 p.m. Because the audience will be limited to 200 people, cancer patients may bring only one guest, said Emily Frankoski, C2C executive director.

Tickets for this performance are free but must be reserved at <https://forms.gle/iMY4vqPzvdAUctsq5>.

“Our Stories of Cancer” is based on interviews and shared experiences of cancer survivors and their loved ones, caregivers and medical professionals. Their individual stories were transformed into an artistic experience that addresses the emotional and psychological issues — grief, fear, hope, loss, resilience and connection — related to the disease.

“The performance offers an opportunity to build greater understanding and empathy by sharing the very personal experiences of those who have been impacted by

SEE **DANCE**, 2A

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