



Services

All around communications.

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A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

WT Services, Inc. offering scholarships in Hereford, Friona, Bovina, Bushland for second consecutive year

For the second year WT Services is accepting applications for scholarships that will be awarded students in Hereford, Friona, Bovina, and Bushland in May, 2015.

Scholarships are open only to students whose parents or guardians are WT Services customers, or, to students who are WT Services customers themselves. Applicants must be high school seniors who are candidates for graduation this spring.

An official application form, accompanied by two letters of recommendation, and a wallet-size photo must be submitted. One of the let-

ters of recommendation must be from a teacher, principal, or counselor from the high school that the applicant is currently attending, or attended, or from a college/trade school instructor if you are currently enrolled.

In Hereford, applications may be picked up at the WT Services office at 119 East 4th, or at the Hereford High School counselor's office.

Applications and rules may be picked up at the WT Services office in Friona at 1010 Columbia, and will be provided to the counselor's offices at Friona, Bovina, and Bushland high schools.

To be considered, applications must be fully completed, legibly typed or written, have no attachments other than the photo and two required letters of recommendation, and must be received at the offices of WT Services, Inc. P.O. Box 1776, Hereford, Texas 79045, no later than April 8, 2015.

Mechanics of the scholarships include the following:
* WT SERVICES scholar-

ships may be used at any state or church-sponsored college or university, or at any accredited vocational or technical school.

* Recipients must maintain a minimum of twelve credited hours throughout each semester, or have full-time student status at vocational or trade schools.

* Upon enrollment or pre-enrollment for the fall semester, recipients must send WT SERVICES a confirmation from the registrar's office. Should a recipient drop out of school for any reason, the unused portion of the scholarship will be rescinded.

Why can't we pick and pay for only cable channels we want?

In a recent newsletter, we provided information about the significant rate increases from channel programmers (such as Discovery, ESPN, Lifetime, The Outdoor Channel) that in turn cause a rise in cable TV rates. We also shared information about the costs of retransmission consent agreements that permit cable TV providers to include otherwise free, over-the-air local channels (such as KVII (ABC), KFDD (CBS), KAMR (NBC) and KCIT in Amarillo for their viewers to watch without having an additional antenna. When

viewers learn that local and specialty channel programming costs are the primary driver of the monthly cable TV rate they pay and the cause for rate increases, many have questions. The most common question we hear is, "We don't watch all of those channels. Can't we pick the ones we watch and just pay for them?"

Ironically, cable TV providers have asked programmers basically the same question, "Can't we pay for the most watched channels and skip those that our customers don't want?"

(See **WHY CAN'T**, Page 2)

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Hereford: A Smart Community—with Fiber to the Premise—by WT Services.

Why can't we pick only cable channels we want?...from Page 1

Whatever the choice of wording, the basic premise to the question is the ability to select channels from programmers on an ala carte basis, like you would select individual items from a restaurant menu.

The issue of ala carte channel selection has been the center of negotiation, debate, lobbying, regulation and law making for many years. And, in short, the answer to the question is "no." Despite efforts to the contrary, programmers have the power to require cable TV providers to purchase numerous "filler" channels or "affiliated" channels in order to get the channels that most viewers demand be on the lineup. This is known as "must carry" to cable providers. (To get the channels your viewers want, you "must carry" these other channels on your lineup too.)

So, in order to get the channels you do want, WT Services may be required to purchase numerous other channels that you never tune in to. And, the most watched and desired channels are often the ones that come with requirements to purchase the highest number of additional channels to accompany them.

Much like our viewers, WT Services would prefer to only pay for the channels that are most desired and watched. Unfortunately,

that is currently not an option for cable TV providers. Programmers have popular channels that are in great demand to which they can tie other fledgling or unknown channels. Programmers also have very effective lobbying efforts which have thwarted attempts to change the system to make ala carte selection possible.

In many cases, the "must carry" requirements even specify whether or not a channel can be in the primary lineup offered by a cable provider or whether the channel can be placed into a tier that is optional

Lifeline, a government assistance program, offers a discount on the monthly telephone bill of qualifying low-income consumers to help make telephone service affordable. Aspects and limitations of the program include the following:

- Lifeline receives its support from the Federal Universal Service Fund
- Lifeline is non-transferable
- Only eligible consumers may enroll for the Lifeline program.
- Only one Lifeline discount is allowed per household

To qualify for Lifeline, subscribers must have an income at or below 150% of the federal Poverty Guidelines, or they may participate in a variety of assistance programs includ-

ing the following: Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA) Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) Health benefits coverage under the state Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), The National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program

for viewers to purchase. And, TV providers must pay programmers based on the total number of their customers, regardless of whether the channel is ever viewed by anyone on the provider's system.

WT Services takes its responsibility to provide quality programming at the lowest possible rates very seriously. Every effort is made to negotiate the most favorable terms with the local broadcast stations and other major programmers. However, there are some elements that impact your

rates that remain out of the control of WT Services. Programming from local broadcast channels (such as KVII, KFDA, KAMR, and KCIT) and others remains the single largest expense faced by WT Services in the provision of your video service. We appreciate your video business and will continue to explore options, as they become available, to minimize the rate increase impact on our customers. If you have any questions in regard to your video entertainment services, please call our office at 360-9000.

Universal Service support includes:

• Lifeline assistance provides federal discounts for WT Services Hereford customers of \$9.25 and state discounts of \$6.42 for a total Lifeline discount of \$15.67 to aid with

the cost for basic monthly local telephone service.

• Toll Limitation Service that allows you to control your long-distance charges

For more information, to see if you qualify or for a Lifeline Enrollment Form to self-certify, contact: •WT Services, Inc. P.O. Box 1776, or 119 East 4th Street, Hereford, TX 79045, or call 806-360-9000. •Lite-Up Texas 1779 Wells Branch Parkway Suite 110B #357 Austin, TX 78728 or call toll free at 1-866-454-8387 www.liteuptexas.org

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Lifeline consumers will be required to make certain certifications upon signing up for Lifeline service and renewals are required.