



**FCC NEWS** from the Federal Communications Commission

**Media Contact:**

Will Wiquist, (202) 418-0509  
will.wiquist@fcc.gov

**For Immediate Release**

## **FCC ANNOUNCES EXCELLENCE IN ECONOMICS, ENGINEERING AWARD WINNERS**

WASHINGTON, September 30, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission today announced the winners of the agency’s annual Excellence in Economic Analysis and Excellence in Engineering Awards. The Excellence in Economic Analysis Award recognizes Commission staff for outstanding economic analysis conducted in the course of their work at the FCC, while the Excellence in Engineering Award recognizes Commission staff who have made outstanding engineering, scientific, or technical contributions to the FCC’s work.

Chairman Ajit Pai made the announcement at today’s Open Commission Meeting. The 2020 Excellence in Economic Analysis Award was presented to Nicholas Copeland, Paul LaFontaine, Sean Sullivan, and Patrick Sun of the Office of Economics and Analytics. The 2020 Excellence in Engineering Award was presented to Melvin Del Rosario and Christopher Miller of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau.

“The outstanding work of the FCC’s expert staff is the lifeblood of this agency’s operations. Today, it is my honor to spotlight six exemplary representatives of our dedicated team and highlight the vital importance of economic analysis and engineering to fulfilling our responsibility to the American people,” said Chairman Pai. “Nicholas, Paul, Sean, and Patrick’s work establishing consistent cost models for the proposed 5G Fund’s federal support for rural wireless connectivity shows why we have put an increased emphasis on integrating and elevating economic analysis within the Commission’s proceedings. Meanwhile, Melvin and Chris performed exemplary work on our first-of-its-kind effort to help connect Tribal communities through access to mid-band spectrum. I thank all of the award winners for their efforts to advance the public interest.”

**Excellence in Economic Analysis Award** – Nicholas Copeland, Paul LaFontaine, Sean Sullivan, and Patrick Sun of the Office of Economics and Analytics share the 2020 Excellence in Economic Analysis Award for their development of the three economic models used to determine the 5G Fund—a proposed new FCC program to distribute up to \$9 billion for next-generation wireless broadband connectivity in rural America—adjustment factor values. Their work estimates the relative costs of providing services across areas with differing terrain characteristics and business cases based on carriers’ own entry, infrastructure deployment, and bidding decisions. Thus, these estimates are to a great extent tied to carriers’ own decisions regarding service provision and network build out.

**Excellence in Engineering Awards** – Melvin Del Rosario and Christopher Miller from the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau share the 2020 Excellence in Engineering award for their innovative work creating a simple, user-friendly web-based mapping tool for applicants in the Commission’s 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Priority Window. Their efforts made it easier for

Tribal entities to apply for long-fallow spectrum in the 2.5 GHz band, and thus help close the digital divide on Tribal lands.

###

**Media Relations:** (202) 418-0500 / ASL: (844) 432-2275 / Twitter: @FCC / [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov)

*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*