Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: LYON CO SCHOOL DISTRICT

Project Title: Computing Centers for Rural Nevada

Project Type: Public Computer Center

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Executive Summary

The historical Northwest corner of Nevada, where gold was first discovered, still resembles the vast high desert displayed in many old cowboy movies. Lyon County alone covers in excess of 2,016 square miles, which is bigger than the state of Rhode Island at 1,213 square miles. These vulnerable rural areas are lacking access to high speed broadband service which needs to become available to the general public. Therefore, in order to provide a solution, Lyon County School District is partnering in this BTOP, PCC grant application with unserved and under-served communities, healthcare, library System, County Resources, Colleges, Sheriff’s Department, Native American Tribes, and Lyon and Mineral Counties all proposing to open public Computing Centers in six common areas within the two counties. The area in Northern Nevada to be served includes Dayton, east to Silver Springs, north to Fernley, south to Yerington, east to Schurz and west to Smith Valley. (A horseshoe, ' shaped area - see uploaded map)

Public Computing Centers within the counties are designed to reach an estimated 38,000 people (U.S. Census Bureau, Estimates 2008) who otherwise would not have the opportunity to enjoy such services due to geographically dispersed communities at 17.3 persons per square mile, (U.S. Census Bureau, Estimates 2008) which are currently underserved within the two counties. Today, in excess of forty-five percent of the student population is currently on the free and reduced lunch program and the unemployment rate for Lyon County is at 19.1% (10.7 U.S.), currently the second highest unemployment state in the country. The average wages of the vulnerable population to be served is $47,924 (2008 est.) which is 15% lower than the US Census Bureau reports a median income for the state of Nevada. The impact of Broadband related access for the vulnerable populations especially in zip codes 89447, 89429 and 89427 will be highly beneficial. These strategically located PCC's will offer an intergenerational opportunity for users to be introduced to basic computer skills as well as sophisticated training in 21st Century computer knowledge. This project also intends to: *Provide targeted training and multimedia computer access to the public, including but not limited to students, families, teachers, seniors, youth correctional facility, public libraries, tribal organizations, and hard to reach populations. *Supply connection and access to advanced college level classes offered by Western Nevada College. *Enhance broadband opportunities to public libraries. *Provide job databases and job skill training opportunities for unemployed, homeless, low-income, disabled citizens, and at risk youth. *Offer language training and multi lingual educational resources for ESL families. *Provide GED graduation programs. *Furnish long distance conferencing capability in community buildings and avoiding the prohibitive expense of traveling typical long distances. *Expand awareness of available access points thus maximizing return on the Federal Investment in Technology. The total project cost is $1,064,675.00 . We are requesting $745,006.00 in BTOP Grant funds and are committed to providing 30% matching support in the amount
of $319,669.00. Training will be provided at all sites to include basic computer utilization skills, research capabilities, and internet search options in addition to specific training geared to the various needs of the individual population areas being served. At last families will be able to use self help computer skills to improve knowledge for basic need issues to include health issues, job skills, homework help sites, educational needs, and quality of life. Computers are a necessity rather than a luxury these days, however in areas where 1.) High speed internet access is not available 2.) A lower socio-economic population resides, 3.) Costs are prohibitive and 4.) Opportunities to improve are scarce, the quality of life is low, and the inner desire to improve seems too big of a hurdle. The leaders from many walks of life within Lyon and Mineral Counties have met together in a town hall atmosphere to join together in a supportive partnership of a one time opportunity for change created by the BTOP, PCC grant award opportunity. Each has submitted a letter of partnership ensuring their support to implement quality standards in their effort to open Public Computing Centers throughout the described areas. The Lyon County School District, in hopes of supporting the students, families, and citizens of the area agreed to write and submit the application on all of our behalf. City Mayors, County Manager and their employees, Tribal Chairmen and Tribal Councils, State Personnel, Local business people, nonprofit organizations, hospital Administrators, and citizens of Lyon and Mineral Counties all see the need and benefits the PCC’s would provide. The unconventional unity this project has created throughout such a rural area makes up of a strong force of constituents from many walks of life. However, all have joined together in support of this project to benefit an entire community that is tired of being labeled, "Nevada, the most distressed state in the current economic downturn". But instead, recognizes this as an opportunity to advance with new resources to help prosper one another. It is realized that the success of the PCC program will come from the efforts of each partnering entity, many volunteers, and support within the communities.