We want to improve broadband services and access to public computers that will enable opportunities to rural Hancock County. Citizens who have access to the digital world will improve educational opportunities of children and adults, as well as extending time on task and home with virtual connections. Hancock County wants to offer access to certain trainings in the homes of computer owning citizens via video conferencing. The public will then be able to go to the libraries and community colleges in order to access additional services that Hancock County Schools is not able to provide. We want to ensure that we provide the youth and citizens have knowledge, ethics and skills to harness the power and potential of the digital world. It is vital that we prepare guardian(s) and citizens of our county how to navigate the digital media safely. We want to develop an innovative approach to promote 21st Century Technology tools that will improve student achievement and enhance student learning through the integration of technology. Hancock County will be able to improve local area networks in each school, router, servers, and some workstations with the funds from the grant. This project will take a comprehensive approach to broadband utilization for learning and living regardless of the age. Our targeted population that we will reach during our campaign will be 10,000 citizens ages 4-70 throughout Hancock County. We want to reach those students who will be in pre-kindergarten and those who are senior citizens. Many students from low social-economic households in West Virginia will have doors open to the world and all it has to offer with the use of increased internet connections and speed. Currently in Hancock County, we are facing a 13% unemployment rate. The future of our nation and our state depends on the education of young people as the world becomes more competitive and complex. This will encourage students that remain in school and work harder to attain career goals resulting in more productive citizens. It is very important to provide an effective campaign through the use of flyers sent home with students and distributed at the monthly meetings to the guardian(s). The flyers will advertise the various opportunities and programs that will be provided by the schools because of adequate broadband access. Parents, students and citizens in Hancock County will have county led technology trainings that will be held via video conferencing. In order to measure the impact of our awareness campaign, we will send out paper questionnaires and online questionnaires. We will tally each to determine how the participants learned about various opportunities provided through this project and to survey them to determine additional topics wanted by the community. Many citizens will not have had the opportunity to attend awareness sessions or detailed training on how to use the Internet for education, health monitoring, communications with family, promotion of news and information, sharing documents, understanding today's youth and the tools that are used like online communities and Web 2.0 sites, online courses, tutoring, assessment, online entrepreneurship.
opportunities and social networking. This information will provide them with avenues to learn more
details of different topics based on feedback from questionnaires. The very nature of their opportunities
to have access from home will increase the continued learning process for all—regardless if it is a K-12
student extending learning time at home, parent assisting with homework, an elderly person learning
about medical options, or a dedicated wage earner looking for employment. The Coordinator of
Technology, Jennifer DiGiacinto, has been in the technology industry for 11 years. She has worked on
and has helped to managed million dollar software projects. Mrs. Jennifer DiGiacinto has a Bachelor's
degree in Information Technology and a Master's degree in Software Engineering. As Technology
Coordinator for Hancock County Schools, she has been responsible for purchasing, configuring,
installing, and maintaining all technology in the county. She is also the main trainer for all technology
hardware and software in Hancock County. Prior to working in Hancock County School system, Mrs.
Jennifer DiGiacinto worked at Bethany College as the Help Desk Director in which she was responsible
for all configuring, installing, and maintaining all technology at the college. She also provided extensive
training to faculty members. Hancock County Schools proposes that increasing educational and training
opportunity to our students and community will have a positive increase for Bandwidth demand in the
county. We believe that with increased bandwidth our citizens will be able to take advantage of more
educational services and therefore will have more workforce opportunities and skills. Our proposed
implementation of video conferencing services will encourage students that may be potential drop-outs
to stay in school due to the ability to offer a wide variety of courses and cutting age technology. By
keeping students interested in school, we can increase their desire to learn which will result in a
stronger workforce. Student in today's society are 'digital native'. They learn differently than in the years
past. Hancock County Schools are committed to adjusting learning strategies and services to ensure that
our students remain at the top of the learning curve. The overall cost of Hancock Counties grant
proposal is $1,906,232. This will enable us to provide not only increased bandwidth to our schools and
afford us the opportunity to provide education services not only to our students but to our rural
communities.