Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: MIAMI DADE COLLEGE FOUNDATION, INC

Project Title: OpportunityChangesEverything.net

Project Type: Comprehensive Community Infrastructure

_______________________ Executive Summary _______________________

a. Opportunity the proposed system seeks to address 'Opportunity Changes Everything', is Miami Dade College's (MDC) core institutional belief, and has guided its development into one of America's most outstanding and unique institutions of higher education. By offering its students, faculty, and staff diverse educational opportunities and resources, multiple employment and growth opportunities; and its community and industry partners with a wide array of collaborative opportunities, MDC has been a critical agent in spurring economic growth in Miami-Dade County and revitalizing the community. b. General description of the proposed funded service area In furtherance of this belief, MDC proposes OpportunityChangesEverything.net, a Comprehensive Community Infrastructure Project that will deploy Middle Mile broadband infrastructure to MDC's eight campuses and two outreach centers, located in Miami-Dade County. c. Number of community anchor institutions involved with the project This broadband deployment will impact a student body, faculty, staff and alumni that account for more than 1.8 million individuals. As a community anchor institution and a community college, MDC will advance the statutory purposes established for this competition, as it: 1) improves access to broadband for an underserved sector of the community; 2) improves access to, and use of, broadband service by public safety agencies; and 3) stimulates the demand for broadband, economic growth, and job creation. Furthermore, MDC's goal is supported by a larger plan: recently, the Federal Communications Commission released its inaugural plan for national broadband access. One of the plan's primary goals is to provide affordable access to ultra-high-speed broadband at 'anchor institutions', including community colleges. In 2010, MDC celebrates 50 years of being a pillar of the Miami-Dade County. It has served more than 50% of the county's population by providing accessible, affordable, high quality education while keeping the learner's needs at the center of decision-making and working in partnership with its dynamic, multicultural community. In 2006, MDC reached an astonishing milestone: welcoming its 1.5 millionth student. In a community of 2.3 million, MDC's role remains central to educational, social, cultural and economic growth. Today, more than 170,000 students attend Miami Dade College. It is the largest institution of higher education in the United States and one of the most highly regarded colleges in the nation. Each MDC campus has its own distinct identity and specialties, and they are located throughout Miami-Dade County, from its northern boundary down to its southernmost tip. The communities that house MDC campuses are characterized as economically distressed and significantly underserved, lacking appropriate and significant access to the resources that could assist in their physical, social, and economic development. Homestead, Opa-locka, Liberty City, and Hialeah are some of those communities, to name a few. MDC was created with the idea that anyone with a desire to get a college degree should be given that opportunity. Miami Dade first opened its doors in the 1960s, amidst
the strain of desegregation and the influx of thousands of Cuban refugees. Initially, 1,428 students entered 'Chicken Coop College,' nicknamed for the original buildings that were transformed into classrooms. Dade County Junior College, as it was known back then, was open to any county resident who had graduated from high school. When it opened, the College became Florida's first integrated junior college. By the mid-1960s, enrollment had grown to more than 15,000 students. By 1967, the College was the largest institution of higher education in the state of Florida. During the next decade, Miami Dade further increased its expectation of students, setting a new standard for community colleges throughout the nation. It was during this time that K. Patricia Cross, visiting professor at Harvard's Graduate School of Education, called Miami Dade, 'the most exciting institution of higher education in the country.' Almost 66 percent of students were minorities and 56 percent were women. Part-time students were common. In 1984, Miami Dade started Books by the Bay, which evolved into the Miami Book Fair International. The next two decades were marked by comprehensive reforms of academic programs, as well as the creation of more than 50 new degree and short-term certificate training programs. Miami Dade also introduced multimedia classrooms and the Virtual College, followed by the prestigious Honors College and the Emerging Technologies Center of the America's (ETCOTA), as well as took on management of the reinvigorated Miami International Film Festival. In 2003, Miami Dade also introduced four-year degrees and changed its name to Miami Dade College. The College offers over 300 programs of study and several degree options, including vocational, associate, and baccalaureate degrees. MDC features numerous Community Education classes, online credit classes through the Virtual College, the New World School of the Arts, The Honors College and Dual Enrollment. Committed to being a college of excellence, MDC is renowned for its highly supportive community that recognizes the significant impact of MDC's educational and training programs, and its effective use of adequate resources to enable programs to flourish and the talents of people to emerge. MDC's rapid growth demonstrates a strong need for improved access to broadband services, to remain faithful to its mission and continue to serve the Miami-Dade County community with affordable, high quality educational resources. Improving the broadband access will improve MDC's effectiveness as a community anchor institution, and will help fulfill its mission of delivering affordable, high quality education to its community. Nevertheless, the current funding crisis affecting MDC, a result of budget cuts at the state level and the current economic recession, has impacted its ability to continue providing the quality services that once characterized the institution. Budget cuts have resulted in increased class size, elimination of class sections, and the inability to introduce the new technology so critical to the advancement of education. d. Proposed services The infusion of federal funds from the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program will help MDC launch OpportunityChangesEverything.net, providing an internet bandwidth upgrade for the entire college, interconnecting through a wireless broadband infrastructure its eight campuses and two outreach centers. e. Type of broadband system that will be deployed and overall expected subscriber projections for the project The broadband system to be deployed is Ethernet based with a 10 gigabit network, a dual hub and spoke, 802.11n, and is expected to impact at least 192,000 subscribers by Year 8. Subscribers, in this case, include students, faculty, staff, and alumni of the community college. The total project cost of $14 million; MDC will be providing a 30% in-kind match from internal resources. f. Approach to addressing the nondiscrimination and interconnection obligations The two project vendors, Avaya and FiberNet, will be responsible for upholding the nondiscrimination and interconnection obligations, as they will be operating and
maintaining the network. Both vendors will commit to adopt the practices established by the FCC. g. Qualifications of the Applicant that demonstrate the ability to implement and operate a broadband infrastructure MDC has the organizational capacity needed to implement, manage, and operate a broadband services network of this magnitude. The administration and staff at MDC will collectively contribute to the success of the project with their expertise in network and telecommunications deployment and management, combined with years of experience in managing federally funded projects. g. Number of jobs estimated to be created or saved as a result of this project OpportunityChangesEverything.net will create new opportunities for a community anchor institution of great significance in Miami-Dade County. MDC recognizes the importance of broadband access as an opportunity of economic development and quality of life improvement for any individual. Upgraded broadband infrastructure will help MDC create a unified communications system interconnecting its eight campuses and two outreach centers, that will better serve students, faculty, staff and alumni fulfill their educational, career, and personal goals. It will serve the Miami-Dade County community by providing individuals that are highly-skilled and trained to be competitive and successful in today's workforce, and contribute to the economic growth of the community. In the short term, this project will create nearly 50 jobs, as part of the infrastructure installation.