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Organization:	University of Alaska Fairbanks
Project Name:	Bridging the e-Skills Gap in Alaska
Project Type:	Sustainable Broadband Adoption
State:	Alaska
Federal Award:	\$4,544,546

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Alaska and its rural communities often lack crucial broadband-enabled services like distance learning, public safety, and telehealth. The **University of Alaska Fairbanks**, spearheading the Alaska Distance Education Consortium, proposes to promote broadband adoption across the state by delivering relevant content and services, driven largely by online learning for professional development, to remote villages including dozens of Native Alaskan villages that are most in need of improved service and adoption levels. The project also plans to train "Village Internet Agents" to respond to the hardware and software needs of residents.

The Bridging the e-Skills Gap project also proposes to:

- Provide computer skills and broadband training to as many as 7,400 residents over the life of the project, offering approximately 89,000 training hours focusing on online connectivity, career building, community resources, and education.
- Leverage public computer centers and provide over 600 mobile computers linked to the project portal for loan to residents.
- Engage 21 project partners comprising the Digital Inclusion Council, along with local telecommunications providers, to identify clusters of participants that should receive introductory discounted broadband rates. These clusters could include teachers, healthcare providers, or public safety entities.

ORGANIZATION'S HISTORY

The University of Alaska Office of Information Technology (OIT) is composed of staff from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and statewide University of Alaska staff. OIT provides university consumers with technology, tools and resources to support and enhance learning, research and outreach for Alaskans. The managing partner on this project, the Alaska Distance Education Consortium, is housed within OIT and has managed funding for distance learning in Alaska for over 10 years.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- Alaska Coast Guard and Auxiliary
- Alaska Injury Prevention Center
- Alaska Library Network and Digital Pipeline
- Alaska Military Entrance Education Services
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
- Alaska Pacific University
- Alaska State Hospital & Nursing Home Association
- Alaska State Tech Prep
- Alaska Teacher Placement
- Alaska Vocational Technical Center
- Best Beginning
- Center for Alaska Native Health Research
- Barrow Arctic Science Consortium
- Career Exploration Opportunities
- Department of Education and Early Development
- Family Centered Services of Alaska
- Department of Natural Resources
- KACN-TV Channel One
- Iliasavig Alaska Native Tribal College
- Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.
- Alaska Workforce Investment Board

Data provided in the project description is based on information supplied by the applicant. An executive summary of this application can be found on www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa.

For press-related inquiries, contact 202-482-7002 or press@ntia.doc.gov. For the general public, contact BTOP@ntia.doc.gov.

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