



BROADBANDUSA

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Organization:	Connect Arkansas Inc.
Project Name:	Expanding Broadband Use in Arkansas Through Education
Project Type:	Sustainable Broadband Adoption
State:	Arkansas
Federal Award:	\$3,702,738

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Arkansas, with the third-lowest per-capital income in the nation, also ranks 49th in online connectivity—29 percent of its population has never used the Internet according to the 2008 Arkansas New Economy Index and a related Connect Arkansas survey. Aware that relevancy of the Internet and digital literacy are frequent barriers to broadband adoption, **Connect Arkansas** is proposing a project centered around the basics of digital literacy, online entrepreneurship, and access to tele-health services. First, the project will offer basic computer training and refurbished computers to qualifying families. Second, the project will feature training in the tools of business, including writing basic business plans, the principles of entrepreneurship, and other key skills and plans to showcase student businesses through the Arkansas Economic Acceleration Foundation. Third, Connect Arkansas also intends to collaborate with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences to oversee a comprehensive broadband-based health awareness campaign and provide hands-on training to medical facilities and healthcare providers.

The Expanding Broadband Use in Arkansas project also proposes to:

- Train approximately 2,600 residents over the life of the project, offering approximately 53,000 hours of teacher-led training to help increase broadband adoption.
- Support e-Communities in 57 high-poverty counties to collect data, conduct county-by-county assessments of technology and broadband uptake, and tailor the best strategies for improving broadband adoption statewide.
- Complement Connect Arkansas' State Broadband Data and Development Grant for broadband mapping, not only creating a more accurate picture of the broadband geography in Arkansas but also helping the state formulate a more effective strategy for reaching underserved areas.

ORGANIZATION'S HISTORY

Passed by the state legislature in 2007, the Connect Arkansas Broadband Act sought to ensure the creation of a competitive broadband infrastructure that improves the lives and the economic prospects of all Arkansans. Connect Arkansas is a private, non-profit organization funded by the Act and has worked since its inception to promote and foster broadband education, use, and access throughout the State.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
- Little Rock School District – Computers for Kids
- University of Arkansas at Monticello
- Arkansas Economic Acceleration Foundation
- Arkansas Capital Corporation

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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