CCI Systems, Inc.
105 Kent Street
P.O. Box 190
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

Tel (906) 774-6621   ccisystems.com
Fax (906) 774-9120

March 19, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling,
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear Mr. Strickling and NTIA Reviewers,

On behalf of CCI Systems Inc., this is to state our commitment to the University of Wisconsin – Extension's application for BTOP-funded comprehensive community infrastructure, "Building Community Capacity through Broadband" (Easygrants ID #5710).
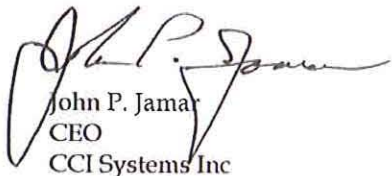
For 55 years, we at CCI Systems have served the telecommunications industry, and through them, the communities they serve, developing expertise in design, construction and maintenance of communication systems as well as the rollout of new technologies and services. CCI's employee owners eagerly take up the challenge of today's converging technologies as they deploy the latest in advanced optical, network and broadband services to an ever-expanding client base. We know well the challenges and opportunities offered by advanced broadband deployment in the Upper Midwest.

As the key for-profit broadband provider in the partnership assembled by UW-Extension, we have committed our Regional Operations Manager, R. Cory Heigl, to serve on the project's oversight committee to ensure responsible execution of the grant requirements and maintain the project's balance of activities in implementing, maintaining and operating the funded broadband network in both Middle Mile and Last Mile service areas.
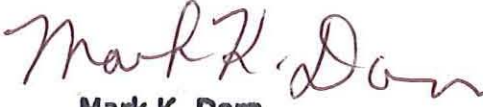
We will contribute $1,958,714.48 in cash match and $216,730.60 as in-kind match to the project.

The broadband infrastructure that we and our project-partners can deploy with BTOP funding will meet the advanced broadband needs of the public and private sectors, provide needed economic stimulus and demonstrate a model for comprehensive community broadband deployment that many communities across the United States can replicate. Thank you for your attention to this proposal.

Sincerely,

John P. Jamar
CEO
CCI Systems Inc

Mark K. Dorn
Controller
University of Wisconsin -
Extension

CONNECT.

March 10, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear Mr. Strickling:

As President of the University of Wisconsin System, I am pleased to share with you this letter pledging my full commitment to the University of Wisconsin-Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband (BCCB)* grant application for comprehensive community infrastructure funding under the Broadband Technologies Opportunities Program (BTOP) administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. This proposal addresses critical needs for communities across Wisconsin and in particular for the five communities that are partnering on this important endeavor. This grant will greatly assist each in building community capacity to serve their regions.

The University of Wisconsin System, with an annual budget of over $4.7 billion, serves over 178,000 students through its 26 campuses located across the State, and more than one million Wisconsin residents through its statewide Extension organization.

The University of Wisconsin System has embarked upon a long-term strategic plan for Wisconsin entitled: *The Growth Agenda for Wisconsin*. That initiative, which has garnered gubernatorial, bi-partisan legislative, community, and business support, has three strategic goals:

> *Grow the number of degree holders in Wisconsin*
> *Grow the number of Wisconsin jobs*
> *Grow stronger Wisconsin communities*

Achieving these goals requires harnessing innovation and knowhow, focusing on strategic opportunities, building broad partnerships, and the wise allocation of limited resources. The grant application submitted by UW-Extension supports, in a significant manner, all three *Growth Agenda* strategic goals and will serve as a model for future investments and partnerships.

As one of the partners for this grant, University of Wisconsin System is strongly committed to community-supported networking. When UW-Extension proposed a five community grant to promote broadband networking in small urban and rural areas where broadband is very expensive or non-existent, we recognized this effort as a critical part of our strategic direction to promote economic development, increase the number of college graduates, and promote public service to the boundaries of the state. We are pleased to be a partner in University of Wisconsin-Extension's comprehensive community infrastructure and sustainable broadband adoption grants.

This project is reminiscent of the rural electrical cooperatives in the early 20th century, a community driven effort to bring electrification to areas of Wisconsin where electrical utilities could not develop profitable business plans. University of Wisconsin-Extension led that cooperative effort just as they are now leading the effort to bring broadband networking to the same areas. The best way to create low-cost broadband service in smaller communities remote from large urban populations is to bring public anchor institutions together to collectively make strategic decisions regarding broadband—how to get it, how best to use it for the benefit of each community. The University of Wisconsin-Extension is the right institution to lead this effort. It has county agents in every county and business development staff in most Wisconsin counties. Together with its partners, University of Wisconsin System, University of Wisconsin-Madison, WISCNET (Wisconsin's research and education network), University of Wisconsin Colleges, and the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board (our state's telecommunications agency), the University of Wisconsin-Extension will build a set of models for how communities across the state may manage their own broadband network needs.
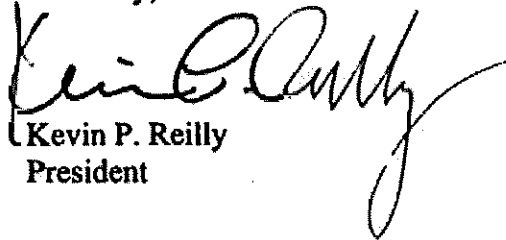
This effort will promote community collaboration and efficiency through cost and resource sharing; will promote improved services such as telemedicine, public safety and enhanced emergency services; and will promote the university's and the technical colleges' Internet-based educational offerings to the remotest parts of the state. It will also enable the private sector to utilize the infrastructure created by the communities to supply much less expensive broadband service to residences and businesses in the five communities supported by these grants. The sustainable broadband adoption grant will ensure that these five communities will utilize and grow the infrastructure to continue to support the public good and enable enhanced private development.

Wisconsin communities have been hit hard by the recent global economic disaster. Rural communities and individuals in manufacturing and lower skilled jobs continue to suffer from chronic unemployment. It is clear that business, healthcare, education, and social networks are inextricably linked to the internet and high speed communication channels. Today, and even more so in future, the quality of life that Wisconsin citizens will enjoy is significantly tied to the quality of the communications infrastructure that they have available to them.

Building Community Capacity through Broadband is such a vital part of the state's economic and educational development, that in addition to the matches provided by UW-Superior, UW-Platteville, UW-Stevens Point, and UW Colleges, the University of Wisconsin System pledges $1,631,000 in cash matching funds and significant staff resources to ensure the success of this grant.

Sincerely,

Kevin P. Reilly
President

Mark K. Dorn
Controller
University of Wisconsin -
Extension

Northcentral TECHNICAL COLLEGE   *Real Life. Real Learning.*

February 24, 2010

Anthony Wilhelm, Director
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program
Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
HCHB, Room 4887
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Director Wilhelm:

Northcentral Technical College (NTC) is honored to be a collaborator in the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program, Part II, application. NTC is a committed partner to the Wausau Community Area Network (W-CAN) as it strongly believes in the importance of community interconnectivity.

According to the 2000 census, Wausau had a population of 38,426 people and is the core city in the Wausau Metropolitan Statistical Area (the MSA includes all of Marathon County with a population of 125,834). The broadband infrastructure that this opportunity provides to a key portion of NTC's service area will have a highly positive impact on an underserved population. NTC students would not only be impacted while attending classes at NTC, but many of their children would benefit through the primary/secondary schools being connected; they would have an advantage through higher levels of service offered through healthcare and public safety entities connected to the broadband; and they would have employment opportunities related to the project.

Like many of us, President Obama understands that modern technology is critical to the expansion of business, education, and health care opportunities in rural areas and the competitiveness of the nation's small towns and rural communities. President Obama supports a comprehensive plan and substantial investments in the expansion of rural broadband so that all areas of the country have access to the tools for fair competition in a 21st century economy. As the majority of NTC's 10-county service area is considered rural, I understand the magnitude and benefits the award of this proposal will have on the NTC community.

NTC holds seven core beliefs, two focused on technology: **Access** - We believe in access for all learners through geographic, financial, service, and learning delivery alternatives; and **Innovation** - We believe in innovation in application of technology in delivery of learning and services through creative solutions. With this in mind, NTC is committed to matching $150,000 of cash towards this application. In addition, NTC will commit necessary personnel, travel, and meeting space resources to ensure successful implementation of the project.

Thank you for your consideration of this imperative project. It will strengthen the Wausau community as well as the partnerships between local and regional educational, public safety, government, healthcare, and business and industry representatives. I look forward to working with the team to implement the application's objectives.

Sincerely yours,

Lori A. Weyers, Ph.D.

Lori A. Weyers, Ph.D.
President

Mark K. Dorn

Mark K. Dorn
Controller
UW-Extension

**OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

March 24, 2010

PHONE: (715) 261-1400
FAX: (715) 261-1133
administrator@mail.co.marathon.wi.us

Anthony Wilhelm, Director
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program
Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
HCHB, Room 4887
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Director Wilhelm:

As you are aware, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) is making $7.2 billion available nationally for competitive grants to improve broadband service. The University of Wisconsin System and the University of Wisconsin-Extension are proposing a pilot project in partnership with local governments to expand broadband capability in five communities through improving infrastructure, expanding public computer centers and the sustainable adoption of new technology. In keeping with ARRA's goals, the effort focuses on connecting community anchor institutions to promote economic recovery, and provide investments to spur technological advances.

Marathon County is proud to partner with the City of Wausau, North Central Technical College, The Wausau School District, Aspirus Hospital, UW Marathon County and the UW Extension to apply for this grant in Phase II of the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program. This partnership, as the Wausau Community Area Network (WCAN), will provide important interconnectivity between public safety, education and medical institutions.

This fiber backbone will provide a means by which these anchor institutions will be able to use video conferencing for education and telemedicine, share electronic health records, and share critical technological resources. It will also create a large wireless infrastructure for our employees and students to access information on mobile devices and enhance the educational opportunities of our citizens. In addition, in the future it could create a marketplace for Internet Service Providers to sell internet access to the WCAN member organizations .

Under the project, Marathon County will be able to connect anchor institutions within the area, educate vulnerable populations and expand local public computer centers. Marathon County supports the UW System/UW-Extension's application for funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and commits to providing $171,000 for its share of the local match necessary to complete the WCAN fiber backbone.

Attached is a resolution from the county board of supervisors supporting the project.

Brad Karger
County Administrator
Marathon County

Mark K. Dorn
**Controller
University of Wisconsin -
Extension**

RESOLUTION #R-__18__-10

SUPPORTING THE UW SYSTEM/UW-EXTENSION'S APPLICATION FOR GRANTS UNDER THE AMERICAN RECOVERY REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA) AND THEIR LOCAL MATCH TO ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY AND BROADBAND SERVICE TO WISCONSIN CITIZENS

WHEREAS, Marathon County has an opportunity to partner with North Central Technical College, the Wausau School District, Aspirus Hospital, UW Marathon County and the UW Extension to apply for a grant in Phase II of the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program; and

WHEREAS, this partnership as the Wausau Community Area Network (WCAN) will provide important interconnectivity between public safety, education and medical institutions; and

WHEREAS, this fiber backbone will provide a means by which these anchor institutions will be able to use video conferencing for education and telemedicine, share electronic health records, share critical technological resources, create a large wireless infrastructure for our employees and students to access information on mobile devices, create a marketplace for Internet Service Providers to sell internet access to the WCAN member organizations, enhance educational opportunities of their citizens; and

WHEREAS the ARRA is making $7.2 billion available nationally for competitive grants to improve broadband service; and

WHEREAS, the University of Wisconsin System and the University of Wisconsin-Extension are proposing a pilot project in partnership with local governments to expand broadband capability in five communities through improving infrastructure, expanding public computer centers and the sustainable adoption of new technology; and

WHEREAS, in keeping with ARRA's goals, the effort focuses on connecting community anchor institutions to promote economic recovery, and provide investments to spur technological advances; and
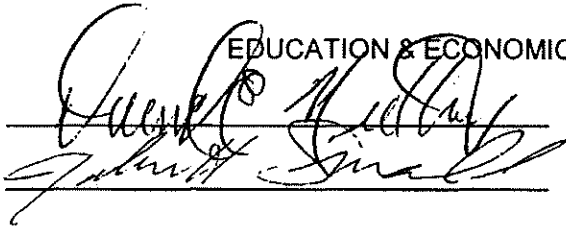
WHEREAS, under the project, Wausau will be able to connect anchor institutions within the area, educate vulnerable populations and expand local public computer centers; and
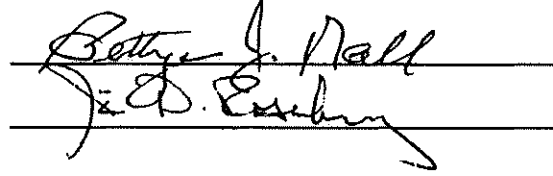
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Marathon County Board of Supervisors supports the UW System/UW-Extension's application for funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and commits to providing $170,000 for use in the Wausau metro area for its share of the local match necessary to complete the WCAN fiber backbone.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the UW Extension, 432 N. Lake Street Room 24, Madison WI 53706.

Respectfully submitted this _23_ day of March, 2010.

EDUCATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____

FISCAL IMPACT: The County's share of the local match for the Wausau Community Area
Network (WCAN) is $170,000.

STATE OF WISCONSIN)
)SS.
COUNTY OF MARATHON)

   I, Nan Kottke, County Clerk in and for Marathon County, Wisconsin, hereby certify that the attached Resolution #R-18-10 was adopted by the Marathon County Board of Supervisors at their Adjourned Annual meeting which was held March 23, 2010.

SEAL

Nan Kottke
Marathon County Clerk

City of Stevens Point
1515 Strongs Avenue
Stevens Point, WI 54481-3594

STEVENS POINT
GATEWAY TO THE PINERIES
1858

Department of
Public Works
Engineering
Phone: 715-346-1561
Fax: 715-346-1650

March 19, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

We write to you today to support University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* (BCCB) BTOP applications, for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption. Both address critical needs for our community through a project that will provide us with the impetus and support we greatly need to build community capacity in the Stevens Point area

We are collaborating on this important endeavor because

- We know it can have long-lasting impact on how we live and work by developing increased access to the broadband need that grows every day to perform job functions, education our residents, and perform government duties.
- This effort will have a real benefit to this community by better supporting public safety, educational opportunities, healthcare, and economic development. All of these different dimensions of a community rely more and more on adequate access to broadband services. These needs are currently underserved, or are cost prohibitive to many of the users who would have the greatest benefit from them.

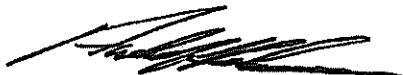As a collaborator we are supporting this effort by:

- Providing ongoing advice and access to our membership by supporting and recognizing the need for community wide cooperation and participation.
- Working closely with BCCB to address the needs of a segment of the population that may be hard to reach or a vulnerable group that requires special attention to ensure understanding and usage of broadband
- Participating in the Community Area Network to ensure usage of broadband technology within our organization
- Considering participation in the development of the physical infrastructure part of this development in the cooperative use of City infrastructure totaling at least $50,000 worth of in-place conduit, and access to a vital river crossing opportunity on utility bridge owned partially by the City of Stevens Point.

s t e v e n s p o i n t . c o m

Benefits and outcomes

- As a result of these grants, our organization will attain more reliable and affordable access to broadband services.

- This effort will allow for cost savings through local network management where community shareholders can collaboratively improve network performance and capacity according to demand, managing their network for continued growth and long-term sustainability with resulting cost-effectiveness.

- This effort will promote community collaboration and efficiency through cost and resource sharing, redundant infrastructure, as well as integrated, innovative and accessible services.

- This effort will enhance life-saving treatment and the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine, enabling high-speed exchange of critical emergency medical information.

- This effort will improve broadband service for our membership, or broadband service availability to areas of the state that currently have limited access at best, new capabilities to communicate and transport data among anchor institutions

- This effort will improve e-commerce capability, address much needed improvement in public safety and ensure sustainable community growth and prosperity

- This effort will create consumer demand and enable other service providers to serve the community.

- This effort will help shape realistic models of broadband deployment and tremendously expand educational resources for our community.

Because of the innovative and highly positive benefits provided by community wide access to broadband services and the ability to promote more cooperative environments within our organizations, we strongly support the project described and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* grant applications.

Sincerely,

Andrew Halverson
Mayor

Joel Lemke
Director of Public Works

Mark K. Dorn
Controller
University of Wisconsin -
Extension

March 5, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling:

I write to you today to support University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* (BCCB) BTOP applications, for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption. Both address critical needs for communities across Wisconsin and in particular for the five communities that are partnering on this important endeavor. These grants will greatly assist each in building community capacity to serve their regions.

Although the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point is not in one of the five communities specifically identified, the fiber infrastructure being proposed in the grant will pass within one mile of our campus. We therefore have the opportunity to connect to this state-wide infrastructure and continue our local community area network efforts.
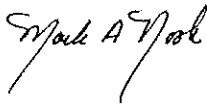
We believe that community owned and operated networks will guarantee public anchor institutions in our community the network bandwidth they need to achieve their mission. We view access to a broadband, robust and scalable network as a public good in the same way as our roads and highways are public goods. By moving network access for our public institutions from a private service to a public good, we will promote community collaboration, improved public health, better access to education and information, more efficient management of public resources, and improved emergency services.

We also believe that community owned networks will bring private sector network providers into the community to supply last mile services to businesses and households. A key component of University of Wisconsin-Extension's grant is to partner with a fiber provider to bring very high capacity low-cost bandwidth to the partner communities. This partnership will not only reduce the community area network's costs, but promote competition for providers to better serve business, industry and residential customers in each community as well as under-provisioned towns and rural areas on the new fiber paths coming to the community.
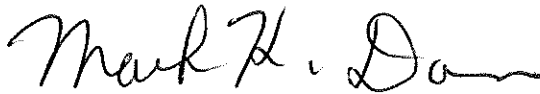
At University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, we believe community area networks are the most logical and efficient way to bring broadband networking into small and rural communities where service providers see little profit for the investment they must make. Like the rural electric cooperatives of seventy years ago—which Wisconsin pioneered—we believe the CANs will serve as network cooperatives to do the same service for broadband.

Because of the innovative and highly positive benefits of the University of Wisconsin-Extension grant, **the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point pledges $50,000 as a cash match** to fund the *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* grant applications.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Nook
Interim Chancellor

Mark K. Dorn
Controller
University of Wisconsin -
Extension

WELCOME HOME TO WAUSAU

Office of the Mayor

James E. Tipple

March 24, 2010

Anthony Wilhelm, Director
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program
Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
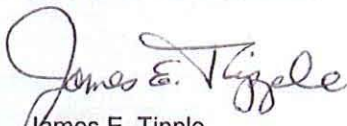HCHB, Room 4887
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Director Wilhelm:

As you are aware, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) is making $7.2 billion available nationally for competitive grants to improve broadband service. The University of Wisconsin System and the University of Wisconsin-Extension are proposing a pilot project in partnership with local governments to expand broadband capability in five communities through improving infrastructure, expanding public computer centers and the sustainable adoption of new technology. In keeping with ARRA's goals, the effort focuses on connecting community anchor institutions to promote economic recovery, and provide investments to spur technological advances.

The City of Wausau is proud to partner with Marathon County, North Central Technical College, The Wausau School District, Aspirus Hospital, UW Marathon County and the UW Extension to apply for this grant in Phase II of the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program. This partnership, as the Wausau Community Area Network (WCAN), will provide important interconnectivity between public safety, education and medical institutions.

This fiber backbone will provide a means by which these anchor institutions will be able to use video conferencing for education and telemedicine, share electronic health records, and share critical technological resources. It will also create a large wireless infrastructure for our employees and students to access information on mobile devices and enhance the educational opportunities of our citizens. In addition, in the future it could create a marketplace for Internet Service Providers to sell internet access to the WCAN member organizations.

Under the project, Wausau will be able to connect anchor institutions within the area, educate vulnerable populations and expand local public computer centers. The City of Wausau supports the UW System/UW-Extension's application for funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and commits to providing in kind donations valued at approximately $39,000 on the Sherman Street section of the project for its share of the local match necessary to complete the WCAN fiber backbone.

James E. Tipple
City of Wausau Mayor
City of Wausau

Brad Marquardt
Director of Public Works

Mark K. Dorn
Controller
University of Wisconsin -
Extension

CITY OF WAUSAU CITY HALL 407 GRANT STREET WAUSAU, WI 54403-4783 (715) 261-6800 FAX (715) 261-6808 TDD (715) 261-6770

JIM DOYLE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF WISCONSIN

March 9, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

I am writing to express my support for University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* (BCCB) and BTOP applications, for comprehensive community infrastructure and sustainable broadband adoption. Both address critical needs for the five communities that are partnering on this important endeavor.

Every new or extended use of broadband in Wisconsin is a win for the state and for the country. The most cost effective solution to the use of broadband capability will be enabled by community planning rolled up into regional plans, state plans and ultimately national plans. Supporting the grass-roots implementation of community based networks at the same time as supporting state plans and national plans will provide the best return on investment by providing the best improvements in the national competitive advantage.

I strongly support the project described and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* grant applications.

Sincerely,

Jim Doyle
Governor

March 23, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear National Telecommunications and Information Administration Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

I am writing to you to enthusiastically support the University of Wisconsin-Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* grant applications for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption. These grant applications address critical needs for communities across Wisconsin and in particular for the five communities that are partnering on this important undertaking. These grants will greatly assist each in building community capacity to serve their regions.

I support these applications because I believe University of Wisconsin-Extension's proposed approach to building capacity through broadband will be highly effective in helping communities to collectively address their unique broadband needs through Community Area Networks – local consortia that look beyond the needs of individual institutions to focus on how best to serve the broader community. As the Provost for the University of Wisconsin Colleges (one of the collaborating partners named in the grant), I know these organizations well and feel confident that through our collaboration, broadband use will indeed increase as a result. Currently, the vast majority of rural Wisconsin residents are unaware of the benefits of broadband. They do not know or do not understand how broadband access would improve their lives. This project is focused on bringing institutions together to collectively make strategic decisions regarding bringing broadband to these communities. These collaborating partners will focus on how to get broadband into these communities, and how best to use it for the benefit of each community. Certainly, efforts to connect community institutions in each of these communities will lead to more effective services in government, education, healthcare, and public safety.

The need for access or improved access to broadband service in these five communities is acute. This effort will allow for cost savings through local network management where community shareholders can collaboratively improve network performance and capacity according to demand, managing their network for continued growth and long-term sustainability with resulting cost-effectiveness. This endeavor will also promote community collaboration and efficiency through cost and resource sharing, and provide integrated, innovative, accessible

432 North Lake Street, Madison, WI 53706-1498 ▪ Phone: (608) 263-1794 ▪ Fax: (608) 262-7872

UW-BARABOO/SAUK COUNTY ▪ UW-BARRON COUNTY ▪ UW-FOND DU LAC ▪ UW-FOX VALLEY ▪ UW-MANITOWOC ▪ UW-MARATHON COUNTY
UW-MARINETTE ▪ UW-MARSHFIELD/WOOD COUNTY ▪ UW-RICHLAND ▪ UW-ROCK COUNTY ▪ UW-SHEBOYGAN ▪ UW-WASHINGTON COUNTY ▪ UW-WAUKESHA

services. Additionally, this effort will advance quality healthcare in these regions by providing access to life-saving treatment to the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine, enabling high-speed exchange of critical emergency medical information. Equally important, the funding provided by this grant will help develop realistic models of broadband operation and tremendously expand educational resources for communities throughout Wisconsin.

There will be numerous highly positive benefits that can be derived from this venture. Local coordination of broadband efforts, cost savings and efficiencies achieved through intentional institutional collaborations, and increased access to healthcare, government, and education services will be realized once this project is funded. In short, the quality of life in the communities targeted by this grant will be greatly improved and enriched. It is for these reasons and more that I strongly support this project and urge your most serious consideration for funding the University of Wisconsin-Extension's ***Building Community Capacity through Broadband*** grant applications.

Sincerely,

Gregory P. Lampe
Provost and Vice Chancellor
Office of Academic Affairs

1000 Oakbrook Drive
Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Phone: 734-527-5700
Fax: 734-527-5790
www.merit.edu

March 16, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear Mr. Strickling and NTIA Reviewers,

I am writing to express support for the University of Wisconsin – Extension's application for "Wisconsin Building Community Capacity through Broadband Middle Mile Infrastructure" (EasyGrants ID: 5710) application to the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Stimulus Program.

UW-Extension and Merit are proposing complementary middle mile broadband infrastructure projects in North West and North Central Wisconsin. Further, Merit proposes to extend Middle Mile broadband infrastructure into Wisconsin that has the potential to serve community anchor institutions in both the Eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan and North East Wisconsin, complementing existing infrastructure available through our partner state research and education network in Wisconsin, WiscNet. Not only will this provide faster speeds at lower costs, but will provide diverse paths to these remote regions, putting them on equal footing with the rest of the country.
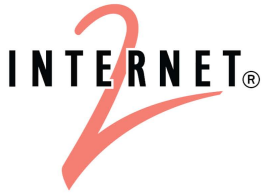
UW-Extension is partnered with an experienced for-profit provider of last mile broadband infrastructure (CCI Systems of Iron Mountain, Michigan) who is also a sub-recipient in our round 2 application (EasyGrants ID: 4658).

Based on our understanding of the need for middle mile broadband in these regions and the needs of community anchor institutions, we at Merit see these projects and partnerships as fundamental components in building sustainable broadband infrastructure that spurs economic development in the Upper Midwest. We strongly support this project for both its intrinsic value to the community and the synergy with our efforts.

Sincerely,

Donald J. Welch, Ph.D.
Don.Welch@merit.edu
Merit Network, Inc.
1000 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104-6794

March 18, 2010

David Lois
Executive Director, WiscNet
740 Regent Street, Suite 203
Madison, WI 53715

Dear Dave:

On behalf of National LambdaRail and Internet2, we are pleased to write in support of the proposal entitled "Building Community Capacity through Broadband (BCCB)" which WiscNet is submitting to the Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (NTIA BTOP).

This proposal will leverage the 100-year statewide community legacy of University of Wisconsin-Extension by delivering advanced broadband to an expanded range of anchor institutions in communities with unmet needs. Partnering with key rural and urban communities, statewide partners such as the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and CCI Systems to deliver middle and last mile infrastructure, this proposal will build community-driven middle mile broadband infrastructures and likely serve as an eventual model for other communities throughout the state. The proposal is likely to facilitate economic growth in isolated geographic areas, job creation through project maintenance and construction, and enhance the availability of affordable broadband service throughout the state. This is likely to allow WiscNet to expand critical access to advanced broadband services throughout the state while enabling new applications that are likely to benefit the entire area. The proposal clearly responds to BTOP priorities and will involve a highly experienced management team.

National LambdaRail and Internet2 have had a long and effective partnership with regional research and education networks such as WiscNet. Both organizations have been leaders in innovative deployments of advanced networking resources that are critical to enhancing the U.S. research and education agenda and positioning its leadership on a global scale. Through development of leading edge Internet technologies like dynamically provisioned bandwidth, end-to-end network performance monitoring systems, and network security, both organizations in partnership with regional networks like WiscNet provide focused support to meet the unique requirements of the research and education community. By working together, this partnership of advanced research networks is particularly well suited to meet ambitious initiatives that are likely to have an impact on the American public, such as those offered by the NTIA BTOP.

Internet2 and National LambdaRail have actively collaborated with many regional networking organizations to advocate for a national broadband footprint whose impact would include linkages between all of the regionally funded BTOP programs within a comprehensive national fabric. In support of this effort, Internet2 and National LambdaRail are submitting a joint BTOP proposal to develop the United States Unified Community Anchor Network (U.S. UCAN) that will leverage their collective partnerships and expertise, and that will provide critical national resources to complement and enhance the viability of regionally funded BTOP projects like BCCB.

We are pleased to offer our joint support of this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Douglas E. Van Houweling
President and CEO
Internet2

Glenn Ricart
President and CEO
National LambdaRail

March 18, 2010

Ed Meachen
Associate Vice President, Learning & Information Technology
University of Wisconsin System
Van Hise Hall Room 1552
1220 Linden Drive
Madison, WI 53706

Re: Comprehensive Community Infrastructure BTOP (Broadband Technology Opportunities Program) Grant Commitment Letter

Dear Mr. Meachen:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), this letter states our commitment to the University of Wisconsin – Extension's Building Community Capacity through Broadband (BCCB) application for BTOP-funded Comprehensive Community Infrastructure.

WisDOT will benefit from this project and commits to the BCCB application the following "in-kind" match contributions of 20-year Occupancy Permits to construct, operate and maintain the proposed Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure in the right of way on the State Trunk Network (total in-kind match contribution equals $1,509,000 over the initial 20-year period) in exchange for 12 fiber strands along each of these routes:

<u>Right-of-Way Occupancy Fee for Utility Permits:</u>
- U.S. Highway 53: Chippewa Falls to Superior, 136 miles @ $6,000/Mile ($816,000)
- U.S. Highway 151: Madison to Platteville, 69 miles @ $7,000/Mile ($483,000)
- Interstate Highway 39: Stevens Point to Wausau, 30 miles @ $7,000/Mile ($210,000)

The UW System and WisDOT have already realized savings and benefits from sharing optical fiber backbone along some corridors in Wisconsin. The additional opportunities afforded by ARRA to expand this infrastructure will also greatly benefit WisDOT in the areas of traffic operations, system surveillance, road safety, incident response, traveler information, and emergency or special event operations.

Sincerely,

David Vieth, Director
Bureau of Highway Operations
Division of Transportation System Development

Mark K. Dorn
Controller
University of Wisconsin -
Extension

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4903

March 8, 2010

Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Strickling:

I am pleased to lend strong support to the University of Wisconsin Extension proposal to receive Broadband Technology Opportunities Program funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce to support the Building Community Capacity through Broadband initiative.

This application represents a collaborative effort to build broadband infrastructure in five communities serving over 23,000 customers. By linking the target areas to rural and tribal communities and anchor institutions, improved access to broadband will increase public availability of computer services, enhance public safety communications, better coordinate networks that serve vulnerable populations, improve connections for education and tele-medicine, as well as attract new businesses to the area and assist existing businesses expand. Additionally, it is anticipated that the project will create new jobs and save more than 8,100 jobs over the two year grant period.

For these reasons, I encourage the U.S. Department of Commerce to give full consideration to the University of Wisconsin Extension request. If I may be of further assistance or provide additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Herb Kohl
U.S. Senator

HK:ry

RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD
WISCONSIN

506 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-5323
(202) 224-1280 (TDD)
feingold.senate.gov

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510–4904

March 10, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

I am writing to express my support of the University of Wisconsin–Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* (BCCB) application for funding under the Broadband Technologies Opportunities Program - Sustainable Broadband Adoption.

The University of Wisconsin-Extension (UWEX) is submitting two linked applications for stimulus funds to promote broadband construction and adoption. According to the application, the BCCB project moves beyond the goal of fiber construction to building the capacity essential to leverage this access for community development. The project will link communications technology to five essentially rural pilot regions: Wausau, the Menomonee Nation, the Chippewa Valley, Platteville and Superior. Each community faces significant economic development, municipal infrastructure, educational or health delivery challenges. The pilot regions have a combined population of more than 420,000 people in over 169,000 households, including significant Hmong, Native American and Hispanic populations. Project components and activities are designed to meet the unique needs and characteristics of each region.

According to the proposal, this project is designed to engage communities to build their own local capacity for education, awareness, and training. It will build digital literacy by transforming institutions, reaching underserved areas and vulnerable populations, and assuring broadband support within each community. Through its awareness campaign and community training, this project will raise consciousness about broadband and spur the desire to personally invest in broadband adoption.

With SBA funding, BCCB can promote broadband demand and the adoption of broadband technology in five regions of the state where it has been traditionally underutilized. I urge you to give the BCCB application full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,

Russell D. Feingold
United States Senator

RDF/jmb

○ 1600 ASPEN COMMONS
ROOM 100
MIDDLETON, WI 53562
(608) 828-1200
(608) 828-1215 (TDD)

○ 517 EAST WISCONSIN AVENUE
ROOM 408
MILWAUKEE, WI 53202
(414) 276-7282

○ 401 5TH STREET
ROOM 410
WAUSAU, WI 54403
(715) 848-5660

○ 425 STATE STREET
ROOM 225
LA CROSSE, WI 54601
(608) 782-5585

○ 1640 MAIN STREET
GREEN BAY, WI 54302
(920) 465-7508

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Wisconsin Economic Development Association Inc.

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.W. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear Mr. Strickling,

As President of the Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA) I write to you today to support University of Wisconsin – Extension's BTOP applications, for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption. Both address critical needs for communities across Wisconsin and in particular the five communities that are partnering on this important endeavor. These grants will greatly assist each region with maximizing the use of broadband for economic growth and the improvement of the quality of life in those regions. Our economic development professionals across the state clearly recognize broadband as a critical piece of infrastructure needed to advance the economy of Wisconsin.

We support these applications because we believe UWEX's proposed approach will be highly effective in helping communities collectedly address their broadband needs through Community Area Networks – local consortiums that look beyond individual institution's needs to focus on how best to serve the larger community. We think UWEX, with their partners – WISCNET, UW-Colleges, UW-System, UW-Madison and ECB, are the right team to create sustainable resources to assist other communities in the future.

We know these organizations well and feel confident that through their collaboration, broadband use will indeed increase as a result. Currently, the vast majority of rural Wisconsin residents are unaware of the benefits of broadband. They simply don't know, or can't see how broadband can improve their lives. Local anchor institutions within many communities are focused solely on their need for greater connectivity, often unaware of others doing the same thing.

This effort is focused on bringing institutions together to collectively make strategic decisions regarding broadband, how to get it, and how best to use it for the benefit of community. Clearly, efforts to connect anchor institutions in each of these communities will lead to more effective services, in government, educational institutions, healthcare and public safety. Health care and educational research, in particular, are important economic engines within our state. Not only do these public institutions need improved access, the students and clients they serve need improved broadband access and training on how to maximize the associated economic benefits.

This project will also:

- Allow for cost savings through local network management where community shareholders can freely improve network performance and capacity according to demand and to manage the network for continued growth and long-term sustainability and cost efficiencies.

- Promote community collaboration and efficacy through cost and resource sharing, redundant infrastructure and integrated, innovative and accessible services.

- Enhance lifesaving treatment and the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine and the high speed exchange of critical life-saving medical information.

Benefits to our economic development professionals will include improved broadband service for our membership, and the businesses within our region. Many areas of the state that currently have sporadic access at best, will gain new capabilities to communicate and transport data to anchor institutions.

Given the innovative and highly positive benefits that can be derived from his effort, we strongly support and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's grant applications.

Sincerely,

Patrick Drinan, President
Wisconsin Economic Development Association

March 8, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary of Communications & Information
National Telecommunications & Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

I write to you today on behalf of Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC) and our 3,500 members statewide in support of the University of Wisconsin-Extension's **Building Community Capacity through Broadband** (BCCB) BTOP applications, for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption. Both address critical needs for communities across Wisconsin and in particular for the five communities that are partnering on this important endeavor. These grants will greatly assist each in building community capacity to serve their regions.

The focus of our business association is to ensure Wisconsin is the most competitive state in the nation, while promoting a healthy business climate. Our members include large and small manufacturers, service companies, local chambers of commerce and specialized trade associations. This project's efforts to connect community anchor institutions in each of the five designated communities will lead to more effective services in government, education, healthcare and public safety. From our perspective, it will enhance our abilities to improve established businesses and foster new entrepreneurial endeavors while enriching the quality of life for our citizens.

This grant will improve broadband service for our membership, strengthen broadband service availability to areas of the state that currently have limited access at best, and offer new capabilities to communicate and transport data thus introducing e-commerce as a business option. We look forward to the realization of new opportunities to promote community collaboration and the creation of new consumer demand this grant funding will ensure.

Because of the innovation it will conceive, the highly positive community benefits it will bring and the much needed stimulus in commerce it will spur, Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce strongly supports this project and urges you to embrace and fully fund these University of Wisconsin-Extension's **Building Community Capacity through Broadband** grant applications.

Sincerely,

James S. Haney
President / CEO

501 East Washington Avenue, Madison, WI 53703-2914 • P.O. Box 352, Madison, WI 53701-0352
Phone (608) 258-3400 • Fax (608) 258-3413 • www.wmc.org

WMC is a business association dedicated to making Wisconsin the most competitive state in the nation.

Wisconsin State AFL-CIO ...*the voice for working families.*

David Newby, President • Sara J. Rogers, Exec. Vice President • Phillip L. Neuenfeldt, Secretary-Treasurer

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,
We write to you today to support University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* (BCCB) BTOP applications, for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption. Both address critical needs for communities across Wisconsin and in particular for the five communities that are partnering on this important endeavor. These grants will greatly assist each in building community capacity to serve their regions.

- We believe University of Wisconsin – Extension's proposed approach will be highly effective in helping communities collectively address their broadband needs through Community Area Networks – local consortia that look beyond the needs of individual institutions to focus on how best to serve the larger community.

- We feel confident that UWEX, with its partners – WISCNET (Wisconsin's research and education network), UW Colleges, UW System, UW-Madison, and the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board (our state's telecommunications agency), comprises an excellent team to create sustainable resources that will assist other communities in the future.

- This project is focused on bringing institutions together to collectively make strategic decisions regarding broadband – how to get it, and how best to use it for the benefit of each community. Clearly, efforts to connect community anchor institutions in each of these communities will lead to more effective services, in government, educational institutions, healthcare and public safety.

- This effort will allow for cost savings through local network management where community shareholders can collaboratively improve network performance and capacity according to demand, managing their network for continued growth and long-term sustainability with resulting cost-effectiveness.

You may receive other credible proposals for this grant, but UW Extension is the only organization that has asked for our support.
Because of the innovative and highly positive benefits (list what they are here again) that can be derived from this effort, we strongly support the project described and urge your positive and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* grant applications.

Sincerely,

David Newby, President

WISCONSIN
COUNTIES
ASSOCIATION

22 EAST MIFFLIN STREET, SUITE 900
MADISON, WI 53703
TOLL FREE: 1.866.404.2700
PHONE: 608.663.7188
FAX: 608.663.7189
www.wicounties.org

March 9, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

We write to you today to support University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* (BCCB) BTOP applications, for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption. Both address critical needs for communities across Wisconsin and in particular for the five communities that are partnering on this important endeavor. These grants will greatly assist each in building community capacity to serve their regions.

We support these applications because we feel confident that UWEX, with its partners – WISCNET (Wisconsin's research and education network), UW Colleges, UW System, UW-Madison, and the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board (our state's telecommunications agency), comprises the right team to create sustainable resources that will assist other communities in the future.

We know these organizations well and feel assured that through their collaboration, broadband use will indeed increase as a result. Currently, the vast majority of rural Wisconsin residents are unaware of the benefits of broadband. They simply do not know or can't understand how broadband access could improve their lives. Local anchor institutions within many communities are focused solely on their own needs for greater connectivity, often unaware of others doing the same thing.
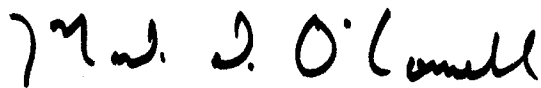
This effort will improve broadband service for our membership, or broadband service availability to areas of the state that currently have limited access at best, new capabilities to communicate

LYNDA BRADSTREET
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

JON HOCHKAMMER
DIRECTOR OF INSURANCE OPERATIONS

JOHN REINEMANN
LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

J. MICHAEL BLASKA
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS & SERVICES

MARK D. O'CONNELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

and transport data among anchor institutions. It will also improve e-commerce capability, address much needed improvement in public safety and ensure sustainable community growth and prosperity

Because of the innovative and highly positive benefits that can be derived from this effort, we strongly support the project described and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's ***Building Community Capacity through Broadband*** grant applications.

Sincerely,

Mark D. O'Connell
Executive Director

Local
Government
Institute *of Wisconsin*
Bringing Local Governments Together to Serve

999 Fourier Drive, Suite 201
Madison, WI 53717
608. 831.1662
www.localgovinstitute.org

March 8, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

We write to you today to support University of Wisconsin – Extension's ***Building Community Capacity through Broadband*** (BCCB) BTOP applications, for comprehensive community infrastructure and broadband adoption. Both address critical needs for communities across Wisconsin and in particular for the five communities that are partnering on this important endeavor. These grants will greatly assist each in building capacity to serve their regions.

The Local Government Institute of Wisconsin was created to find solutions for the efficient delivery and funding of local government services consistent with the needs of our citizens. We recently completed a study identifying barriers and opportunities to making local government service delivery more efficient and cost effective. One of the major findings of the study was that the greatest opportunity for efficiencies in service delivery could be found through consolidation of services across jurisdictions within a region.

Such consolidation of services, however, depends upon having an infrastructure that facilitates effective communication, collaborative information management across jurisdictions and transmission of large amounts of data in real time to regional partners who must act on that data. While many of Wisconsin's metropolitan areas have this infrastructure, most of our rural areas do not – and Wisconsin is predominantly a rural state. Of the 592 incorporated municipalities within the state, only 85 have populations greater than 10,000 and a mere 13 have populations greater than 50,000.

The Local Government Institute of Wisconsin supports these applications because they are focused on bringing local governments together to collectively make strategic decisions regarding broadband – how to get it, and how best to use it for the benefit of each community. Clearly, efforts to connect local governments in each of these regions will lead to more effective services and improved public safety.

This project should also help to lower the cost of providing services within the community by demonstrating and promoting the effective use of broadband for both e-government and public safety purposes. For example, Wisconsin Public Television will be creating video case studies on a variety of best-practices including e-government. The end product, professionally produced video's telling compelling stories that could be shared with other units of local government across the state.

Without this investment in broadband infrastructure it will be very difficult to address issues of service consolidation across jurisdictions, reducing the cost of delivering local government services within jurisdictions or even maintaining existing service quality levels. The fiscal pressure on local government today means that the funds required to build this infrastructure will not come from this sector for quite some time.

We feel the benefits to local property taxpayers and citizens can be significant with the availability of broadband service to facilitate initiatives to deliver local government services more efficiently and with improved quality. The effort represented by these grant applications will promote community collaboration and efficiency through cost and resource sharing as well as integrated, innovative and accessible services.

Because of the innovative and highly positive benefits to taxpayers and citizens that can be derived from local government involvement in this effort, we strongly support the project described and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's ***Building Community Capacity through Broadband*** grant applications.

Sincerely,

Gary Becker
Executive Director

February 19th, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

I am writing to you today to express my support for the University of Wisconsin-Extension's Building Community Capacity through Broadband Initiative (BCCB). What is proposed addresses needs for five communities in the state to improve their broadband capacity, and perhaps more importantly, to serve as a model for deployment of the same improvements to other underserved regions of the State of Wisconsin.

As a community volunteer, I see great value in the features of the UW Extension's Initiative that intend to:

1. Provide broadband service, or substantially improve broadband service to regions of the state that not adequately served now. Broadband service is a necessity to compete in the 21st century economy, and these regions will be at a significant disadvantage without it.
2. Drive collaboration, efficiency, resource sharing and cost control among the public and private sector entities that are prepared to participate. As you can see from the grant submission, community stakeholders have already organized and made investments with this goal in mind.
3. Work collaboratively with the private sector, avoiding duplication of existing services, and working together to leverage the investments that the private sector is willing to make for the benefit of the communities.
4. Attain a goal of sustainability, meaning that the projects do not drive ongoing demands for public funds and become financially self-sustaining with this investment.

I expect the UW Extension's plan to accomplish these objectives while at the same time building a durable, collaborative relationship among the public and private sector participants in each of the project communities. With these benefits in mind, I ask that you provide the funding requested by the University of Wisconsin- Extension for the BCCB.

Sincerely,

Keith Summers
President, Board of Visitors
UW Colleges/ UW Extension

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

I would like to encourage you to support the University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* (BCCB) applications for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption. These applications address critical economic and workforce needs for communities across Wisconsin and in particular for the five communities that are partnering on this important endeavor. The grant awards would greatly assist in building community broadband capacity to serve their regions.

I support these applications because high-level broadband capacity is increasingly a necessary component of workforce and economic development, from both a training and a commerce perspective. As you know, workforce development (talent) will be the key in competing successfully in the global economic environment. More and more workers and businesses must act to maximize productivity, and analytical and interactive capabilities are becoming paramount. Connecting institutions in each of these communities will lead to more effective services in and between the private and public sectors.

Furthermore:

- Many rural Wisconsin residents are uncertain of how broadband access could improve their personal and business opportunities.

- Local anchor institutions are in need of expanding their broadband capacity for commerce and local community support and integration.

- This project is focused on bringing institutions together to collectively make strategic decisions regarding broadband – how to get it, and how best to use it for the benefit of each community.

- I support the University of Wisconsin - Extension's proposed approach as UWEX is highly effective in helping communities collectively address their broadband needs through Community Area Networks – local consortia that focus on how best to serve the community.

- UWEX, with its partners – WISCNET (Wisconsin's research and education network), UW Colleges, UW System, UW-Madison, and the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board (our state's telecommunications agency), comprises the best team to create sustainable resources.

Not unlike the federal program to electrify rural America, it is now time to bring enhanced broadband capacity there as well. Broadband is the modern equivalent of electricity, increasing and enhancing information flows across distance. The size of the endeavor necessitates the size of the resource. States and local communities didn't have the resources for rural electrification then, and they don't have the resources for rural broadband now. Only federal funding constitutes enough resource to accomplish installation of this vast and modern network.

Such an investment will bring much of the state and country into the modern age of telecommunications. The capability will also allow rural areas to access services that are becoming increasingly expensive for low-density areas. Such services as education, health care, shopping, and entertainment are becoming available more cheaply via broadband out of necessity (remote education and health care) and access (elderly access to shopping and social activities).

This effort will allow for cost savings through local network management where community shareholders can collaboratively improve network performance and capacity according to demand, managing their network for continued growth and long-term sustainability with resulting cost-effectiveness.

Due to the increased need for talent and supply of services, particularly in rural areas, and the availability of modern technology to address these needs, the expansion and enhancement of broadband capacity in rural areas is necessary, but not yet sufficient. The technology exists to remedy this problem. Delay in applying requisite resources will only further divide rural and urban well-being. The economic prosperity and geographical poverty separations between rural and urban can be narrowed with the help of better technology and increased access to education and commerce. Broadband expansion and enhancement in rural areas is a giant step into narrowing the divide.

I strongly support the project described and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's **Building Community Capacity through Broadband** grant applications.

Sincerely,

D. K. Winters

Dennis K. Winters
Chief, Office of Economic Advisors
Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development
Madison, WI

March 9, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling:

I am submitting this letter to express strong support for the University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* (BCCB) BTOP applications, for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption. Both address critical needs for communities across Wisconsin, for farms and rural citizens, and in particular for the five communities that are collaborating on this important endeavor. These grants will greatly assist each in building community capacity to serve their regions.

These applications, upon implementation, will be highly effective in helping communities collectively address their broadband needs through Community Area Networks – local consortia that look beyond the needs of individual institutions to focus on how best to serve the larger community. UWEX, with its partners – WISCNET (Wisconsin's research and education network), UW Colleges, UW System, UW-Madison, and the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board (our state's telecommunications agency), have the right team that can support these communities now and in the future.

I strongly believe these organizations have unique capacities to increase broadband use in rural areas. They understand how broadband access can improve citizens' lives. Local anchor institutions within many communities are focused solely on their own needs for greater connectivity, often unaware of others doing the same thing. This project will bring institutions together to collectively make strategic decisions regarding broadband – how to get it, and how best to use it for the benefit of each community. Clearly, efforts to connect community anchor institutions in each of these communities will lead to more effective services, in government, educational institutions, healthcare and public safety.

This funding will bring about significant cost savings through local network management where community shareholders can collaboratively improve network performance and capacity according to demand. The collaborative nature of this effort will promote efficiency through cost and resource sharing, avoiding redundant infrastructure, as well as providing more accessible services to those who have not benefited from broadband to date. The effort will also enhance life-saving treatment and the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine, enabling high-speed exchange of critical emergency medical information. This effort will improve e-commerce capability, address much needed improvement in public safety and ensure sustainable community growth and prosperity.

Because of the innovative and new broadband access for farmers and rural citizens that can be derived from this effort, we strongly support the project described and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* grant applications.

Sincerely,

Rod Nilsestuen
Secretary

Office of Learning and Information Technology

1554 Van Hise Hall
1220 Linden Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53706-1525
(608) 263-2571
(608) 265-3175 Fax

e-mail: olit@uwsa.edu
website: http://www.uwsa.edu

February 12, 2010

To: Steve Wildeck
           Vice Chancellor, Administrative Services, UW Colleges

From: Ed Meachen
           Associate Vice President, OLIT, UWSA

RE: Procurement of fiber or fiber leases for UW Colleges

As we discussed earlier this week, UW System working in concert with WiscNet is planning to procure its own fiber, or long-term fiber leases, to each of the thirteen College's campuses around the state. This fiber will connect the campuses with one of the four WiscNet POPs (point of presence), thus eliminating the need to use commercial carriers.

It is likely that we will be moving UW-Fon du Lac and UW-Waukesha to fiber before the end of 2010, and moving UW-Baraboo/Sauk County to fiber later in 2010 or early in 2011. In addition, UW-Extension's federal stimulus broadband grant application will include UW-Barron County and UW-Marathon County which, if successful, will provide fiber connections to WiscNet's backbone. UW-Fox Valley may also be a candidate later this year or next for a fiber connection.

We have asked individual institutions to provide $50,000 to help us acquire fiber leases when we find opportunities to connect them to our backbone. This is usually a small fraction of the actual cost to provision fiber. Although we are challenged by UW-Colleges' 13 physical locations, in the interest of fairness, we agreed that your institutional cost would be the same as the other UW institutions. It will take us some years to complete the work for all the colleges.

There is one difference. We would like College's $50,000 contribution to be counted as match for the federal stimulus grant. So, in fact, the $50,000 Colleges contribution would be *only* for UW-Barron County and UW-Marathon County. By doing this, we may be able to leverage your contribution to help the entire

Universities: Madison, Milwaukee, Eau Claire, Green Bay, La Crosse, Oshkosh, Parkside, Platteville, River Falls, Stevens Point, Stout, Superior, Whitewater. Colleges: Baraboo/Sauk County, Barron County, Fond du Lac, Fox Valley, Manitowoc, Marathon County, Marinette, Marshfield/Wood County, Richland, Rock County, Sheboygan, Washington County, Waukesha. Extension: Statewide.

communities in Wausau and Rice Lake. And you will have fulfilled your obligation for the entire UW-Colleges.

Let me know if you have any questions. We will be invoicing you in FY 11.

Cc: Andy Taylor
       Mike Schlicht
       Christine Quinn
       Maria Alvarez-Stroud
       Brian Remer
       David Lois

Mark K. Dorn
Controller
University of Wisconsin -
Extension

WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

February 24, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

RE: Building Community Capacity through Broadband in the Menominee Nation (Wisconsin)

Dear Mr. Strickling:

We are writing to strongly support the University of Wisconsin-Extension's BTOP grant applications for the following five pilot communities in Wisconsin: Chippewa Valley, Menominee Nation, Platteville, Superior, and Wausau. These applications involve comprehensive community infrastructure, public computer centers, and sustainable broadband adoption and will be submitted to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration for broadband funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Given the grant's emphasis on building community capacity, we have joined together in a bipartisan effort to raise awareness and support for this beneficial project that meets the goals laid out in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The project application from the Menominee Nation is for a community area network and includes a separate application which will be submitted with Charter Communications. Menominee Nation has been working very closely with the University of Wisconsin-Extension and has been focused on creating a strategy based on local partnerships. This effort will allow those to get access to the technology to access the following areas:

- UW Online credit and non-credit programs
- Skill-building opportunities including GED assistance
- Career exploration
- Workshops for vulnerable populations

-2-

Menominee Nation has developed their partnership with UW-Extension to focus their grant application on public computer centers and sustainable adoption. The effort focuses on providing intensive educational outreach to Menominee Nation Members about broadband and its potential for life improvement, business & economic development, and providing investments to spur technological advances.
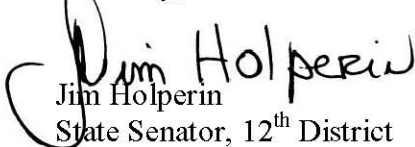
In addition, the Menominee Nation has submitted an infrastructure grant separately and will only be participating in the sustainable adoption grant as part of the University of Wisconsin-Extension's BTOP grant applications for the five pilot communities in Wisconsin.
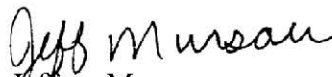
This project is a collaboration designed to meet the broadband network needs of both the public and private sectors, within urban and rural communities throughout northeastern Wisconsin.

We understand and wholeheartedly support the belief that all citizens should have access to broadband and the transforming opportunities it affords. Broadband services will allow Wisconsin residents to access new career and educational opportunities. It can help Wisconsin businesses reach new markets and improve efficiency. It will also help struggling communities that seek to attract new industries while enhancing their local government's capacity to deliver critical services.

Given the innovative and highly positive benefits that may be derived from this effort, we strongly support and urge your positive consideration and maximum funding of UW-Extension's grant request on behalf of the five pilot communities in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Jim Holperin
State Senator, 12th District

Jeffrey Mursau
State Representative, 34th District

JCH/bs

University of Wisconsin-Extension
601 Extension Building
432 North Lake Street
Madison, WI 53706-1498
608-263-2775
608-265-4545 (fax)
800-947-6644 (TTY)

March 9, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

I write to you today to support University of Wisconsin – Extension's ***Building Community Capacity through Broadband*** (BCCB) BTOP applications, for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption. Both address critical needs for communities across Wisconsin and in particular for the five communities that are partnering on this important endeavor. These grants will greatly assist each in building community capacity to serve their regions.

As Dean and Director of UW-Extension Cooperative Extension, I have been involved in the project oversight committee and have been working with Mr. Andy Lewis, a Professor from UW-Extension Cooperative Extension on the planning and proposal development. I have worked with Mr. Lewis in developing a network of our county-based faculty in the development of local coordinating and planning working groups. If funded, I will continue to work with Mr. Lewis in the implementation of the project's activities, the support of its goals, the collaboration with our county-based faculty, and service on the project oversight committee.

I will not be directly involved in project management, although I will be supporting Mr. Lewis and our colleagues at the state and community levels. I do intend to work with our Cooperative Extension colleagues to contribute $50,000 over two years as a non-federal cash cost share.

The project's value to the communities depends on effective local planning and implementation. Our colleagues in the counties where these communities are located will play an integral role in the overall coordination of the project and ensuring that the connect between broadband access and economic development is maintained. They will also play a critical role in the facilitation and delivery of educational programs intended to increase the use and understanding of broadband.

The value to the UW-Extension Cooperative Extension stems from the value that our state and county colleagues add to the community. Our cooperative extension county offices are partially funded by county tax revenues, and our presence is not mandated. Therefore, our sustained presence in the county depends on our ability to demonstrate and document value-added educational programming and to document the outcomes and impacts. As former Dean Ayse Somersan wrote in her book titled, "Distinguished Service", Cooperative Extension has a long track record of "…organizational development and institution building - University faculty helping people of similar interests and avocations form associations and organizations to learn from each other,

further a cause, shape public policy and provide an organized way for University staff to deliver education." Based on these numerous past experiences, Extension is well positioned to assist in building capacity within communities to address broadband expansion in a coordinated, efficient, and effective manner through the establishment of Community Area Networks (CAN's).

This project will be a very important component in our ability to demonstrate and communicate our value to our county partner. Most importantly, increasing broadband access and improving the underlying economic opportunities will be of large benefit to the people and businesses in the participating communities – the ultimate goal of our work as an educational institution.

Sincerely,

Richard Klemme
Dean and Director
Professor of Agricultural and Applied Economics, UW-Madison
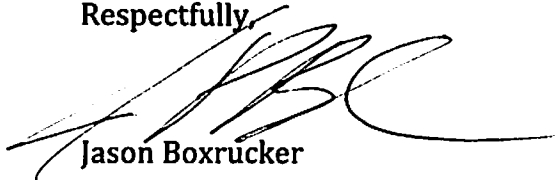
March 19, 2010

Mr John P Jamar
Chief Executive Officer
CCI Systems Inc
105 Kent St
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

Dear Mr. Jamar,

North States Utility has reviewed the proposed route of the Comprehensive Community Infrastructure project, "Building Community Capacity through Broadband", as proposed jointly by the combination of University of Wisconsin-Extension and CCI Systems. North States Utility supports this private/public partnership. We at North States Utility have a strategic partnership with CCI Systems. As a strategic partner, we intend to commit a major portion of our construction resources to assist in the construction of Middle Mile and Last Mile portions of the Proposed Funded Service Area (PFSA).

North State Utility is a Wisconsin based contractor, specializing in Underground Utility construction, and have installed thousands of miles of fiber optic cables across this state and others. Our expertise in the diverse terrain and ground conditions of Wisconsin gives us the advantage of providing cost effective services while also providing the hard working people of Wisconsin much-needed job opportunities. This partnership is good for the people of Wisconsin. In the propagation of these needed networks, UWEX and CCI Systems will mutually benefit Community Anchor Institutions and give ample broadband opportunities to thousands of residents throughout the PFSA.

Respectfully,

Jason Boxrucker

Operations Officer

North State Utility

PUSH
INCORPORATED

March 19, 2010

Mr. John P Jamar
Chief Executive Officer
CCI Systems Inc
105 Kent St
Iron Mountain, MI 49801

Dear Mr. Jamar,

Upon reviewing the proposed route of the Comprehensive Community Infrastructure project, "Building Community Capacity through Broadband," as proposed jointly by the combination of University of Wisconsin-Extension and CCI Systems, we support this private/public partnership. We at Push Inc. have had a business relationship with CCI Systems for several years. To build upon that relationship, we intend to commit a major portion of our construction resources to assist in the construction of Middle Mile and Last Mile portions of the Proposed Funded Service Area (PFSA).

Push Inc. is a Wisconsin based contractor, specializing in Underground Utility Construction, and have installed thousands of miles of fiber optic cable across this state and others. Our expertise in the diverse terrain and ground conditions of Wisconsin gives us the advantage of providing cost effective services while also giving hard working people of Wisconsin much-needed job opportunities. This partnership is good for the people of Wisconsin. In the propagation of these needed networks, UWEX and CCI Systems will mutually benefit Community Anchor Institutions and give ample broadband opportunities to thousands of residents throughout the PFSA.

Respectfully,

Jack A. Lapcinski

WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

February 25, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

RE: Building Community Capacity through Broadband in Wisconsin's Chippewa Valley

Dear Mr. Strickling:

We are writing to strongly support the University of Wisconsin-Extension and the University of Wisconsin System's BTOP grant application for Wisconsin's Chippewa Valley. Chippewa Valley is one of five pilot communities in this grant. The application for Chippewa Valley involves comprehensive community infrastructure, public computer centers, and sustainable broadband adoption and will be submitted to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration for broadband funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Given the grant's emphasis on building community capacity, we have joined together in a bipartisan effort to raise awareness and support for this beneficial project that meets the goals laid out in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

In Chippewa Valley, the project applicant is a community area network known as the Chippewa Valley Internetworking Consortium (CINC). This consortium is a regional work group formed in 1999 to coordinate regional communication infrastructure projects with city, county and state government, educational institutions, libraries, nonprofits, and technology providers to facilitate network creation that is innovative, competitive, and economically sustainable. CINC members, represented by chief information officers, include:
- Cooperative Educational Service Agency 10 (CESA 10)
- University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
- County of Chippewa
- Chippewa Falls Area Unified Schools District
- City of Chippewa Falls
- City of Eau Claire County of Eau Claire
- Eau Claire Area Schools

- The Indianhead Federated Library System
- Associate members: Sacred Heart Hospital (Eau Claire), St. Joseph's Hospital (Chippewa Falls) and Luther Midelfort (Eau Claire)

This broadband funding project will:

- Advance constituents' community efforts in healthcare, education, research, and effective governmental operations
- Enhance lifesaving treatment, health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine and the high-speed exchange of critical life-saving medical information
- Create local jobs by keeping support services within the community, generate broadband-related jobs, enhance community ability to attract and enable modern competitive businesses that require high-performing broadband, and support local business entrepreneurs who require web access
- Allow for cost savings through local network management where community shareholders can freely improve network performance and capacity according to demand; manage the network for continued growth and long-term sustainability and cost efficiencies
- Promote community collaboration and efficiency through cost and resource sharing, improved face-to-face and virtual communication, and integrated, innovative and accessible services

As a BTOP grant applicant, CINC's project is a collaboration designed to meet the broadband network needs of both the public and private sectors, and within urban and rural communities.

We understand and whole-heartedly support the belief that all citizens should have access to broadband and the transforming opportunities it affords. Broadband services will allow Wisconsin residents to access new career and educational opportunities. It can help Wisconsin businesses reach new markets and improve efficiency. It will also help struggling communities that seek to attract new industries while enhancing their local government's capacity to deliver critical services.

Given the innovative and highly positive benefits that may be derived from this effort, we strongly support and urge your positive consideration and maximum funding of UW-Extension's grant request on behalf of the Chippewa Valley community in Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Senator Pat Kreitlow
23rd Senate District

Rep. Kristen Dexter
68th Assembly District

Jeffrey Wood

Rep. Jeff Wood
67th Assembly District

Scott Suder

Rep Scott Suder
69th Assembly District

Ann Hraychuck

Rep. Ann Hraychuck
28th Assembly District

John Murtha

Rep. John Murtha
29th Assembly District

WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE
P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

Mary Hubler

Rep. Mary Hubler
75th Assembly District

Kathleen Vinehout

Senator Kathleen Vinehout
31st Senate District

Chris Danou

Rep. Chris Danou
91st Assembly District

Mk A. Radcliff

Rep. Mark Radcliffe
92nd Assembly District

Jeff Smith

Rep. Jeff Smith
93rd Assembly District

Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Inc.

March 9, 2010

Services
Available:

Advocacy

Job
Development

Employment
Counseling

Job Placement

Food Pantry

Information and
Referral

Housing and Home
Management
Assistance

Cultural
Orientation

Craft Shop

Cultural
Social Events

Outreach

Short-term
Counseling

Ethnic
Communication
Network

24 Hour Translation
Service

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

RE: Letter of Support for BTOP Sustainable Adoption and Comprehensive Community Infrastructure Grant, *"Building Community Capacity through Broadband"*

Dear Mr. Strickling,

I write to you today to support University of Wisconsin – Extension's *"Building Community Capacity through Broadband"* BTOP application for sustainable broadband adoption and Comprehensive Community Infrastructure.

These projects will greatly benefit our Hmong communities in western Wisconsin, particularly youth.

Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Inc. (ECAHMAA) was established in 1982 as a non-profit organization to provide services for refugees from Southeast Asia. The organization is committed to empowering Chippewa Valley Hmong-Americans to become socially and economically self-sufficient. It is the only agency in the area specializing in providing services tailored to Hmong cultural and linguistic needs. Through its services, ECAHMAA has provided Hmong-Americans with access to housing, health care, career, and resources to access educational opportunities. The organization also teaches job skills, strengthens family relationships, and promotes and preserves traditional customs.

Hmong History in the Chippewa Valley
The Hmong originally came from China and relocated in Laos. During the Vietnam War, the United States Central Intelligence Agency recruited the Hmong to work in a secret war operation against communism in Laos. As a result of this war, the Hmong suffered heavy losses. When the US withdrew from Laos, the communist government began to exterminate the Hmong for their loyalty to the United States. This persecution forced many Hmong to seek political asylum in

Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Inc.

Thailand and subsequently to the US. The Hmong-Americans began arriving in the United States after 1975. Although America offered safety from the threat of communist persecution, life in a new country was not without its challenges. The ECAHMAA was established to help Hmong families and individuals overcome cultural shock, language barriers, lack of education, and lack of job skills. These issues are relevant for both recently arrived refugees and established residents. For the past two decades the ECAHMAA has been sensitive to the needs of both groups within the Hmong community.

Since the ECAHMAA started, the Hmong population has grown to over 3,000 in Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties, making it the largest minority group in the area. Hmong refugees in the Eau Claire area have adjusted to an urban and highly technological lifestyle. Many still plant gardens and sell produce at the local farmers' market because of their strong agricultural background.

The ECAHMAA provides many programs to the Hmong community in the Chippewa Valley. These programs include: Employment & Training, Housing Program, Family Strengthening, Building Bridges, Social Services and the Partnership for Strong Family. Many of these programs depend upon broadband internet connectivity to some extent, but our current service is extremely slow.

High speed broadband internet connectivity would be a great benefit to our work. For example, we plan to offer summer computer courses and internet classes for our Hmong youth, but limits to our current connectivity are great. Our Building Bridges program would also benefit greatly by high speed connectivity. Because our Hmong Community Center is open after regular ECAHMAA business hours for meetings, workshops, and other activities, this new broadband connectivity would be a great benefit to our extended Hmong community and the general public in the Chippewa Valley.

The Chippewa Valley Internetworking Consortium (CINC) is overseeing the BTOP infrastructure project to build community capacity in the Chippewa Valley. CINC is a regional Community Area Network formed in 1999 to coordinate regional communication infrastructure projects with city, county and state government, educational institutions, libraries, nonprofits, and technology providers.

We are collaborating with CINC on this important endeavor because:

- It will provide high speed connectivity to our computer lab which is extensively used by the Hmong community and by our Hmong youth in particular.

Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Inc.

- It will increase our broadband capacity and enhance our many programs and allow us to provide added resources and educational resources to the Hmong community
- The University of Wisconsin – Extension's *"Building Community Capacity through Broadband"* Sustainable Adoption project will provide educational opportunities to our youth
- This project will have a lasting impact on the lives of our boys and girls as a result of teaching them skills they need for fulfilling and rewarding work and personal lives.
- This program will provide us with in-kind donated computers and monitors from associate CINC members such as Sacred Heart Hospital (Eau Claire).

As a collaborator in the University of Wisconsin – Extension's *"Building Community Capacity through Broadband"* BTOP project, we are supporting this effort by:

- Helping to identify an audience of Hmong adults and boys and girls interested in learning life and career skills using our new high speed broadband connectivity
- Working with the UW-Extension and other CINC members such as the Indianhead Federated Library System (IFLS) to help provide training to youth (and even training and equipping some of our youth to provide training to other boys and girls)
- Preparing and maintaining our computers for ECAHMAA use
- Assisting in the educational outreach component of the "Building Community Capacity through Broadband" project by providing our patrons with the proper educational equipment, curricula and training to utilize opportunities presented by our new high speed broadband access

As a collaborator, we hope our Hmong community members (particularly youth) will benefit from the following:

- Improved connectivity for our ECAHMAA computers
- Newer computer equipment in our computer lab (from in-kind donations through CINC) and possibly adding new computers
- Educational and training opportunities for our youth
- Additional resources for our young patrons, including:

  1. Helping members of the Hmong community identify and use career information online, use resources for basic resume writing and search for part-time/summer job
  2. Beginning Internet use for youth
  3. Social networking
  4. Health, wellness and recreational research

An Equal Opportunity Employer
Nonprofit Organization

Services Available:

Advocacy

Job Development

Employment Counseling

Job Placement

Food Pantry

Information and Referral

Housing and Home Management Assistance

Cultural Orientation

Craft Shop

Cultural Social Events

Outreach

Short-term Counseling

Ethnic Communication Network

24 Hour Translation Service

Participating Agency
United Way

Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Inc.

5. Other age-appropriate research, education and usage for youth

An Equal Opportunity Employer
Non-profit Organization

Because of the innovative and highly positive benefits that can be derived from this effort, I strongly support the project described and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's Building Community Capacity through Broadband grant applications.

Thank you for your consideration of this grant.

Sincerely,

SiaCha Lor, Interim Director
Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, Inc.
423 Wisconsin Street
Eau Claire, WI 54703
Open Mon - Fri 8 AM - 5 PM
Phone: (715) 832-8420 | Fax: (715) 832-0612

chaechmaa@yahoo.com

Participating Agency
United Way

423 WISCONSIN STREET EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN 54703 (715) 832-8420 FAX: (715) 832-0612

RWHC

Your partner. Your source.

February 9th, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

RE: Support for University of Wisconsin-Extension BTOP Grant (Chippewa Valley Pilot)

Dear Mr. Strickling:

On behalf of the Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative (RWHC), and both of us personally, we are writing to enthusiastically support the University of Wisconsin-Extension's Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) grant applications for the following five pilot communities in Wisconsin: Chippewa Valley, Menominee Nation, Platteville, Superior, and Wausau. The pilots' applications involve comprehensive community infrastructure, public computer centers, and sustainable broadband adoption and will be submitted to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration for BTOP funding under the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act)*.

We understand that this collaboration is designed to advance the broadband network needs of both the public and private sector in metropolitan cities and rural areas. In addition to providing low cost and secure high quality communications to hospitals and clinics (far beyond commercial internet services), this same broadband network would benefit schools, city and county municipalities and libraries.

We strongly support this initiative for three reasons:
(1) In Wisconsin, community and economic development is best accomplished through multi-sector collaboration such as is proposed in this application.
(2) The grant application it is congruent and coordinated with the larger statewide efforts to achieve meaningful use of health information technology.
(3) We support the Hospital Sisters Health System (HSHS) partnership in the Chippewa Valley pilot. HSHS has a good track record in Wisconsin.

Demonstration of Need
Per the priority review requirement of the BTOP Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), the RWHC formally validates a "demand" and indicates "a need for access" and "improved access to

broadband service" in rural areas of Wisconsin (NOFA at 13). Many rural critical access hospitals and clinics have little or no access to broadband to facilitate telemedicine and to share critical high bandwidth data (such as MRI or CT scans) with other healthcare providers.

RWHC is a member-owned network of 35 rural and community hospitals–one of the earliest and most successful models for collaboration among rural health providers in the country. Incorporated in 1979, RWHC provides a wide range of programs and services to members and non-members alike, including: advocacy, education, professional roundtables, financial consulting, legal services, coding consultation, quality programs, workforce development, health information technology resources, and various clinical services.

As a collaborative of rural hospitals, we are particularly grateful for the outstanding track record that the Hospital Sisters Health System has had in improving access to and availability of health services in many of our state's most vulnerable communities.
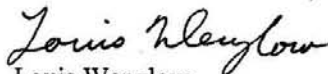
Given the innovative and highly positive benefits that may be derived from this effort, we respectfully request your consideration of the UW-Extension's grant request on behalf of the five pilot communities in Wisconsin.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support of this important BTOP grant application. Please let us know if there is anything else we can do to be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Tim Size
Tim Size
RWHC Executive Director

Louis Wenzlow
Louis Wenzlow
RWHC Director of Health Information Technology

CCEDC

CLARK COUNTY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Clark County Economic Development Corporation & Tourism Bureau

301 N. Main St. • P.O. Box 236
Loyal, WI 54446
www.clark-cty-wi.org

phone 715-255-9100 • fax 715-255-9153
tourism info 888-CLARK-WI
clarkwi@tds.net

LETTER OF SUPPORT
for a
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
Grant Application to Support Rural Broadband in Western Wisconsin

2/5/2010

Clark County Economic Development Corporation is an interested partner in the Wisconsin grant application for broadband funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This collaboration is designed to advance the broadband network needs of both the public and private sector in metropolitan cities and rural areas. In addition to providing low cost and secure high quality communications to hospitals and clinics (far beyond commercial internet services), this same broadband network would benefit schools, city and county municipalities and libraries.
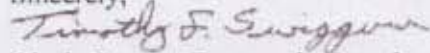
We agree this project will provide Clark County Economic Development Corporation with access to a robust broadband infrastructure allowing us to meet the many challenges of our new information economy.

The broadband funding project provides high speed internet access for our community that will:

- **Advance our community's efforts** in healthcare, education, research, and effective governmental operations.

- **Enhance lifesaving treatment** and the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine and the high speed exchange of critical life-saving medical information.

- **Create local jobs** by keeping support services within the community, generate broadband-related jobs, enhance our community's ability to attract and enable modern competitive businesses that require high performing broadband, and support local business entrepreneurs who require web access.

- **Allow for cost savings** through local network ownership where community shareholders can freely improve network performance and capacity according to demand and to manage the network for continued growth and long-term cost efficiencies.

- **Promote community collaboration and efficiency** through cost and resource sharing, improved face-to-face and virtual communication, redundant infrastructure and integrated, innovative and accessible services.
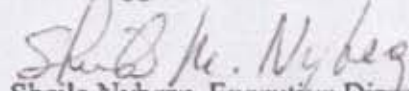
We believe this innovative opportunity will provide Wisconsin with the broadband infrastructure to both achieve and sustain economic recovery. With the support of this grant, we look forward to participating in collaborative efforts with partners to develop a robust broadband infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Timothy F. Swiggum

Clark County Economic Development Corporation
Tim Swiggum, President

Sheila M. Nyberg

Sheila Nyberg, Executive Director

301 N. Main
P.O. Box 236
Loyal, WI 54446
715-255-9100

Chuck Rueth, Vice-President	Chamber/Agriculture, Loyal
Diane Feiten, Secretary	Individual, Colby
Linda Susa, Treasurer	Chamber/Econ.Dev., Greenwood
Steve Amacher	Clark County
Betty Dallas	Individual, Thorp
Ken Dix	Chamber/Econ.Dev., Colby
John Gaier	Education, Neillsville
Greg Glisczinski	Business, Neillsville
Thom Gorst	Village of Granton
Arlan Hamm	Village of Curtiss
Dick Hunsader	Village of Dorchester
Dave Jankoski	City of Stanley
John Knox	Chamber/Econ.Dev., Greenwood
Dennis Kramer	Chamber/Econ.Dev., Abbotsford
Carol Lampsa	City of Loyal
Jim Leonhardt	Individual, Owen
Everett Lindgren	Village of Withee
Jim Maurina	Business, Dorchester
Don Meyer	Business, Dorchester
Diane Murphy	City of Neillsville
Donald Pentz	City of Greenwood
Jim Schecklman	City of Greenwood
James Schmidt	City of Colby
Sue Sossaman	City of Abbotsford
Robert Steinwagner	Village of Unity
Ray Teclaw	City of Thorp

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF THE GREATER CHIPPEWA VALLEY

**Boys & Girls Club
Of the Greater
Chippewa Valley, Inc.**
201 E. Lake Street
Eau Claire, WI 54701
Phone: 715.855.0081
Fax: 715.855.0082

March 2, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

**RE: Letter of Support for BTOP Sustainable Adoption and Comprehensive
Community Infrastructure Grant, *"Building Community Capacity through
Broadband"***

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

I write to you today to support University of Wisconsin – Extension's *"Building
Community Capacity through Broadband"* BTOP application for sustainable
broadband adoption. This project addresses critical needs for our communities in
western Wisconsin through a project that will provide us with the impetus and
support we greatly need to build community capacity.

The Boys & Girls Club of the Greater Chippewa Valley provides structured
programming for youth ages 8 – 18 after school and on school breaks. The Club
inspires all youth, especially those that needs us most, to reach their full potential as
productive, caring and responsible citizens. The Boys & Girls Club provides
programs and services promote and enhance the development of youth by instilling a
sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence. The five core program
areas include: Character & Leadership, Health & Life Skills, The Arts, Sports,
Recreation & Fitness and Education & Career. The Club offers Club Tech, an
introductory course for using computers and Open CPU for checking email.

The Chippewa Valley Internetworking Consortium (CINC) is overseeing the BTOP
infrastructure project to build community capacity in the Chippewa Valley. CINC is
a regional Community Area Network formed in 1999 to coordinate regional
communication infrastructure projects with city, county and state government,
educational institutions, libraries, nonprofits, and technology providers. CINC's
network expansion and creation is innovative, competitive, and economically
sustainable.

We are collaborating on this important endeavor because:

- It will provide high speed connectivity to our computer lab for boys and girls
  which will increase our broadband capacity and enhance our Club Tech (an

introductory course for using computers), our Open CPU program, and other educational and recreational internet activities

- The University of Wisconsin – Extension's *"Building Community Capacity through Broadband"* Sustainable Adoption project will provide educational opportunities to our youth
- This project will have a lasting impact on the lives of our boys and girls as a result of teaching them skills they need for fulfilling and rewarding work and personal lives.
- This program will provide us with in-kind donated computers and monitors from associate CINC members such as Sacred Heart Hospital (Eau Claire).

As a collaborator in the University of Wisconsin – Extension's *"Building Community Capacity through Broadband"* BTOP project, we are supporting this effort by:

- Helping to identify an audience of area boys and girls interested in learning life and career skills using our new high speed broadband connectivity
- Working with the UW-Extension and other CINC members such as the Indianhead Federated Library System (IFLS) to help provide training for our boys and girls (and even training and equipping some of our kids to provide training to other boys and girls)
- Providing ongoing advice and support to our volunteers, donors and patrons
- Preparing and maintaining the computer labs for our patrons' use
- Participating in the CINC Community Area Network to ensure usage of broadband technology within our organization
- Assisting in the educational outreach component of the "Building Community Capacity through Broadband" project by providing our patrons with the proper educational equipment, curricula and training to utilize opportunities presented by our new high speed broadband access

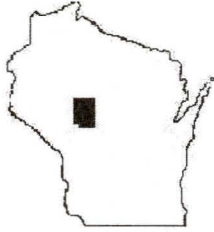As a collaborator, we hope our boys and girls will see the following benefits and outcomes:

- Improved connectivity in our computer lab
- Newer computer equipment in our computer lab (from in-kind donations through CINC) and possibly added terminals
- Educational and training opportunities for our youth
- Additional resources for our young patrons, including:
    1. Seeking career information online, basic resume writing and part-time/summer job search resources
    2. Beginning Internet use for boys and girls
    3. Social networking
    4. Health, wellness and recreational research
    5. Other age-appropriate research, education and usage

Because of the innovative and highly positive benefits that can be derived from this effort, I strongly support the project described and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's Building Community Capacity through Broadband grant applications.

Sincerely,

Craig Olsen
Board President
Boys & Girls Club of the Greater Chippewa Valley

LETTER OF SUPPORT

for a

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
Grant Application to Support Rural Broadband in Western Wisconsin

January 28, 2010

Clark County is an interested partner in the Wisconsin grant application for broadband funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This collaboration is designed to advance the broadband network needs of both the public and private sector in metropolitan cities and rural areas. In addition to providing low cost and secure high quality communications to hospitals and clinics (far beyond commercial internet services), this same broadband network would benefit schools, city and county municipalities and libraries.

We agree this project will provide **Clark County** with access to a robust broadband infrastructure allowing us to meet the many challenges of our new information economy.

The broadband funding project provides high speed internet access for our community that will:

- **Advance our community's efforts** in healthcare, education, research, and effective governmental operations.

- **Enhance lifesaving treatment** and the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine and the high speed exchange of critical life-saving medical information.

- **Create local jobs** by keeping support services within the community, generate broadband-related jobs, enhance our community's ability to attract and enable modern competitive businesses that require high performing broadband, and support local business entrepreneurs who require web access.

- **Allow for cost savings** through local network ownership where community shareholders can freely improve network performance and capacity according to demand and to manage the network for continued growth and long-term cost efficiencies.

- **Promote community collaboration and efficiency** through cost and resource sharing, improved face-to-face and virtual communication, redundant infrastructure and integrated, innovative and accessible services.

We believe this innovative opportunity will provide Wisconsin with the broadband infrastructure to both achieve and sustain economic recovery. With the support of this grant, we look forward to participating in collaborative efforts with partners to develop a robust broadband infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Christina M. Jensen
Clark County Clerk
(715) 743-5150

March 19, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

We write to you today to state our commitment to University of Wisconsin (UW) –
Extension's Building Community Capacity through Broadband (BCCB) BTOP applications,
for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption.
Both address critical needs for our community through a project that will provide us with
the impetus and support we greatly need to continue to enhance network connectivity for
the University of Wisconsin - Madison off campus unit located in the region.

This opportunity enables connection of the UW Madison Material Distribution Services'
SWAP (Surplus With A Purpose) facility in Verona, Wisconsin to a reliable, cost effective
network. Ensuring a reliable connection has been a challenge in coordinating services form
several providers as the only options are with providers at the far edges of their service
regions. We have been plagued with rare, but ongoing reliability issues.

SWAP collects, processes, and redistributes surplus property generated by UW-Madison
and state agencies, while providing UW-Madison departments, government agencies and
non-profit organizations with low-cost, quality surplus equipment and supplies and finding
reuse and recycling markets for surplus property. Once a week the excess inventory is
made available to the public. Both e-Business and e-Commerce are vital to this group as
services are for the entire state and sometimes national. With this owned and managed
network infrastructure, not only will a significantly greater level of reliability be ensured,
but bandwidth can be economically scaled to meet certain future needs.

UW-Madison has had an extremely productive relationship with UW-Extension. We have
collaborated with WiscNet, a primary partner in the UW-Extension BTOP application, to

provide regional network services to the educational and public sector institutions in the state. This connection will supplement the many off campus units being connected with the Metropolitan Regional Fiber Network (MUFN, Easy Grants ID # 3576) that was funded in the first round of BTOP. We enthusiastically support this effort which we see as a natural evolution of WiscNet. In that regard we are also ready to commit $4000 as our share of the cash match for this grant application.

Because of the innovative and highly positive benefits that can be derived from this effort, we strongly support the project described and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's Building Community Capacity through Broadband grant applications.

Sincerely,

Ron Kraemer
CIO and Vice Provost for Information Technology
UW-Madison

Mark K. Dorn
Controller
University of Wisconsin -
Extension

CITY OF EAU CLAIRE
HOUSING
AUTHORITY

March 5, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

RE: Letter of Support for BTOP Sustainable Adoption and Comprehensive Community Infrastructure Grant, *"Building Community Capacity through Broadband"*

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

I write to you today to support University of Wisconsin – Extension's *"Building Community Capacity through Broadband"* BTOP application for sustainable broadband adoption. This project addresses critical needs for our communities in western Wisconsin through a project that will provide us with the impetus and support we greatly need to build community capacity.

Park Tower Apartments is a City of Eau Claire Housing Authority facility that provides affordable housing to the elderly and disabled. Our mission is to provide decent, safe and sanitary affordable housing to those who may have no other housing choice. Ours is an independent living facility. Internet access for all tenants would be, yet, another way for our tenants to maintain their independence.

Park Tower Apartments provides space for agencies providing support services (such as energy assistance, tax assistance, banking, benefits, etc.) and this space has no broadband connectivity. In addition, staff offices at Park Tower Apartments have limited broadband connectivity. Enhanced computer connectivity would help our staff to meet our goal of provide housing services to our tenants.

The City of Eau Claire is a member of the Chippewa Valley Internetworking Consortium (CINC). CINC is overseeing the BTOP infrastructure project to build community capacity in the Chippewa Valley. CINC is a regional Community Area Network formed in 1999 to coordinate regional communication infrastructure projects with city, county and state government, educational institutions, libraries, nonprofits, and technology providers. CINC's network expansion and creation is innovative, competitive, and economically sustainable.

We are collaborating on this important endeavor because:

- It will provide high speed connectivity to our office and residents which would improve their quality of life and provide connectivity to agencies and social workers that visit to assist with benefit eligibility
- This grant will have a lasting impact on the lives of our residents by possibly making Park Tower Apartments a Wi-Fi site.

203 SOUTH FARWELL STREET   EAU CLAIRE, WI 54701

EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY

- In addition to connectivity, this project can provide us with in-kind donated computers and monitors from associate CINC members such as Sacred Heart Hospital (Eau Claire) for the use of our residents when agencies and social workers visit to assist with benefits eligibility.

As a participant, we hope our residents will see the following benefits and outcomes:

- Improved connectivity for information on benefits eligibility, education and e-commerce
- Newer computer equipment (from in-kind donations through CINC) and possibly a new terminal for use of agencies and social workers in a secured area

Because of the innovative and highly positive benefits that can be derived from this effort, I strongly support the project described and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's Building Community Capacity through Broadband grant applications.

Sincerely,

Keith D. Johnathan
Executive Director
Housing Authority of the City of Eau Claire

River Country

Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.

1304 N. Hillcrest Parkway, Suite B, Altoona, WI 54720
Phone: 715-834-9672 Fax 715-834-8663 Email: rivercountry@rivercountryrcd.org
www.rivercountryrcd.org River Country is on Facebook: Become a Fan Today!

Mission: "Enhance quality of life by promoting collaborative efforts that protect and conserve our human, natural, and economic resources."

February 26, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

RE: Support of BTOP Grant, "Building Community Capacity through Broadband"

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

We write to you today to support University of Wisconsin – Extension's **Building Community Capacity through Broadband** (BCCB) BTOP applications, for comprehensive community infrastructure and for sustainable broadband adoption. Both address critical needs for our rural communities and agricultural economies in western Wisconsin and build community capacity.

River Country RC&D is a non-profit (501 c 3) organization serving twelve counties in West Central, WI. Our role is to be a catalyst; encouraging sustainable economic development, conserving natural resources, and empowering people to bring about positive change. The Council focuses on assisting projects that improve the sustainability and economic well-being of our communities and farms

Chippewa Valley Pilot: The Chippewa Valley portion of this project is led by a community area network known as the Chippewa Valley Internetworking Consortium (CINC). This consortium is a regional public and private consortium formed in 1999 to coordinate regional communication infrastructure projects with city, county, and state government, educational institutions, libraries, nonprofits, and technology providers. CINC members include:
- Cooperative Educational Service Agency 10 and the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
- Chippewa County, Chippewa Falls Area Unified Schools District and the City of Chippewa Falls
- County of Eau Claire, City of Eau Claire and the Eau Claire Area Schools
- Associate members include Sacred Heart Hospital (Eau Claire), St. Joseph's Hospital (Chippewa Falls) and Luther Midelfort/Mayo (Eau Claire)

We support this effort because broadband connectivity is needed to increase the economic capacity of our agricultural community. Rural and small towns are underserved with broadband. They are at a disadvantage economically in a wired world. It's hard to run even a internet basic application with dial-up connections, and almost impossible to take advantage of websites, on-line classes, and social media. Broadband connectivity can have long-lasting impact on how people live and work in the agricultural community.

BENEFITS & OUTCOMES:

- As a result of these grants, broadband service will be made available to areas of the community that currently have sporadic access at best.
- This effort will allow for cost savings through local network management where community shareholders can collaboratively improve network performance and capacity according to demand, managing their network for continued growth and long-term sustainability with resulting cost-effectiveness.
- This effort will promote community collaboration and efficiency through cost and resource sharing, redundant infrastructure, as well as integrated, innovative and accessible services.
- This effort will improve e-commerce capability and ensure sustainable community growth and prosperity
- This effort will create consumer broadband demand and enable other service providers to serve the community.
- This effort will help shape realistic models of broadband deployment and tremendously expand educational resources for our community.

Because of the innovative and highly positive benefits that can be derived from this effort, we strongly support the project described and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* grant applications.

Sincerely,

Richard Purdy, PhD
River Country RC&D

LETTER OF SUPPORT
for a
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
Grant Application to Support Rural Broadband in Western Wisconsin

02/22/2010

Abbotsford/Colby Area Chamber of Commerce is an interested partner in the Wisconsin grant application for broadband funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This collaboration is designed to advance the broadband network needs of both the public and private sector in metropolitan cities and rural areas. In addition to providing low cost and secure high quality communications to hospitals and clinics (far beyond commercial internet services), this same broadband network would benefit schools, city and county municipalities and libraries.
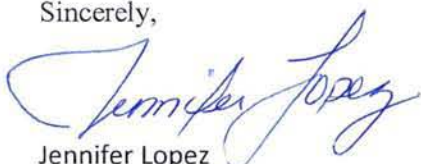
We agree this project will provide **Abbotsford/Colby Area Chamber of Commerce** with access to a robust broadband infrastructure allowing us to meet the many challenges of our new information economy.

The broadband funding project provides high speed internet access for our community that will:

- **Advance our community's efforts** in healthcare, education, research, and effective governmental operations.

- **Enhance lifesaving treatment** and the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine and the high speed exchange of critical life-saving medical information.

- **Create local jobs** by keeping support services within the community, generate broadband-related jobs, enhance our community's ability to attract and enable modern competitive businesses that require high performing broadband, and support local business entrepreneurs who require web access.

- **Allow for cost savings** through local network ownership where community shareholders can freely improve network performance and capacity according to demand and to manage the network for continued growth and long-term cost efficiencies.

- **Promote community collaboration and efficiency** through cost and resource sharing, improved face-to-face and virtual communication, redundant infrastructure and integrated, innovative and accessible services.

We believe this innovative opportunity will provide Wisconsin with the broadband infrastructure to both achieve and sustain economic recovery. With the support of this grant, we look forward to participating in collaborative efforts with partners to develop a robust broadband infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Lopez
Abbotsford/Colby Area Chamber of Commerce Co Secretary
715-223-3444 ext 102

LETTER OF SUPPORT
for a
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
Grant Application to Support Rural Broadband in Western Wisconsin

January 20, 2010

Chippewa Valley Hospital is an interested partner in the Wisconsin grant application for broadband funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This collaboration is designed to advance the broadband network needs of both the public and private sector in metropolitan cities and rural areas. In addition to providing low cost and secure high quality communications to hospitals and clinics (far beyond commercial internet services), this same broadband network would benefit schools, city and county municipalities and libraries.

We agree this project will provide Chippewa Valley Hospital with access to a robust broadband infrastructure allowing us to meet the many challenges of our new information economy.

The broadband funding project provides high speed internet access for our community that will:

- **Advance our community's efforts** in healthcare, education, research, and effective governmental operations.

- **Enhance lifesaving treatment** and the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine and the high speed exchange of critical life-saving medical information.

- **Create local jobs** by keeping support services within the community, generate broadband-related jobs, enhance our community's ability to attract and enable modern competitive businesses that require high performing broadband, and support local business entrepreneurs who require web access.

- **Allow for cost savings** through local network ownership where community shareholders can freely improve network performance and capacity according to demand and to manage the network for continued growth and long-term cost efficiencies.

- **Promote community collaboration and efficiency** through cost and resource sharing, improved face-to-face and virtual communication, redundant infrastructure and integrated, innovative and accessible services.

We believe this innovative opportunity will provide Wisconsin with the broadband infrastructure to both achieve and sustain economic recovery. With the support of this grant, we look forward to participating in collaborative efforts with partners to develop a robust broadband infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Douglas Peterson
Chippewa Valley Hospital
1220 Third Avenue, P.O. Box 224
Durand, WI 54736

OAKLEAF
SURGICAL HOSPITAL

www.oakleafmedical.com

3802 West Oakwood Mall Drive Eau Claire WI 54701

Tel (715) 831.8130
800.635.6197
Fax (715) 831.7894

Billing Department
Tel (715) 858.3726
Fax (715) 839.0992

March 10, 2010

Mr. Lawrence E. Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington DC 20230

RE: BTOP Letter of Support for *"Building Community Capacity through Broadband"* grant application

Dear NTIA Grant Reviewers and Mr. Strickling,

We write to you today to state our support for the University of Wisconsin – Extension's *"**Building Community Capacity through Broadband"*** BTOP application for comprehensive community infrastructure. This project addresses critical health and wellness needs for our community and will provide us with the impetus and support we greatly need to build community capacity in western Wisconsin. This project will significantly benefit the patient care of the OakLeaf Surgical Hospital in Eau Claire.

OakLeaf serves patients from Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, Menomonie and the entire Chippewa Valley. Our state-of-the-art acute care surgical facility includes seven surgical suites, two GI suites, pain management center and a 13-bed inpatient care unit. We have 60 surgeons in 15 specialties that offer surgical procedures on an outpatient or overnight stay basis. With BTOP project funding in the Chippewa Valley, and the partnership of Sacred Heart and St. Joseph's Hospitals, OakLeaf Surgical Hospital will benefit from high speed broadband connectivity that will facilitate the ultra-fast transmission of large diagnostic files (such as a MRI or CT scan), allow the sharing of patient information between facilities, and promote a far more integrated, robust, and comprehensive model of patient care in the Chippewa Valley as a whole.

We support this important endeavor because it will:
- Provide connectivity between our facility and other Chippewa Valley hospitals and healthcare facilities
- Deploy Middle Mile broadband infrastructure to offer new or substantially upgraded service to critical access hospitals in rural and underserved areas
- Save lives and improve health and safety by improving public safety, EMS and healthcare provider communications

To expand and make this network available to improve healthcare in the Chippewa Valley, Sacred Heart Hospital (Eau Claire) and St. Joseph's Hospital (Chippewa Falls) have partnered with the Chippewa Valley Internetworking Consortium (CINC), a Community Area Network. CINC will be overseeing the proposed BTOP project in the Chippewa Valley. CINC was formed in 1999 to coordinate regional communication infrastructure projects with city, county and state government, educational institutions, libraries, nonprofits, and technology providers. CINC facilitates network creation that is innovative, competitive, and economically sustainable.

This project will allow for cost savings through local network management where community shareholders (including schools and municipalities in addition to healthcare organizations) can collaboratively improve network performance and capacity according to demand, and manage their network for continued growth, long-term sustainability and cost-effectiveness. In addition, this project will promote community collaboration and efficiency through cost and resource sharing, redundant infrastructure, and integrated, innovative and accessible services.

Because of the innovative benefits to health, safety and wellness from this effort, we strongly support the project and urge your positive consideration and funding of University of Wisconsin – Extension's *Building Community Capacity through Broadband* grant applications.

Sincerely,

Michael J McClain, MHS, MS, PA-C

Chief Executive Officer

OakLeaf Surgical Hospital

Baldwin
Area
Medical Center, Inc.

January 21, 2010

Mr. Anthony Wilhelm, Director
Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)
Office of Telecommunications and Information Applications
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce, HCHB, Room 4887
1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20230

RE: Chippewa Valley Internetworking Consortium BTOP Grant Application for Comprehensive Community Infrastructure, Public Computer Centers, and Sustainable Broadband Adoption

Dear Mr. Wilhelm:

Baldwin Area Medical Center is an interested partner in the Wisconsin grant application for broadband funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This collaboration is designed to advance the broadband network needs of both the public and private sector in metropolitan cities and rural areas. In addition to providing low cost and secure high quality communications to hospitals and clinics (far beyond commercial internet services), this same broadband network would benefit schools, city and county municipalities and libraries.

We agree this project will provide Baldwin Area Medical Center with access to a robust broadband infrastructure allowing us to meet the many challenges of our new information economy.

The broadband funding project provides high speed internet access for our community that will:

- **Advance our community's efforts** in healthcare, education, research, and effective governmental operations.
- **Enhance lifesaving treatment** and the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine and the high speed exchange of critical life-saving medical information.
- **Create local jobs** by keeping support services within the community, generate broadband-related jobs, enhance our community's ability to attract and enable modern competitive businesses that require high performing broadband, and support local business entrepreneurs who require web access.
- **Allow for cost savings** through local network ownership where community shareholders can freely improve network performance and capacity according to demand and to manage the network for continued growth and long-term cost efficiencies.
- **Promote community collaboration and efficiency** through cost and resource sharing, improved face-to-face and virtual communication, redundant infrastructure and integrated, innovative and accessible services.

We believe this innovative opportunity will provide Wisconsin with the broadband infrastructure to both achieve and sustain economic recovery. With the support of this grant, we look forward to participating in collaborative efforts with partners to develop a robust broadband infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Alison H. Page, CEO
Baldwin Area Medical Center

LETTER OF SUPPORT
for a
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
Grant Application to Support Rural Broadband in Western Wisconsin

December 16, 2009

Hudson Hospital & Clinics is an interested partner in the Wisconsin grant application for broadband funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This collaboration is designed to advance the broadband network needs of both the public and private sector in metropolitan cities and rural areas. In addition to providing low cost and secure high quality communications to hospitals and clinics (far beyond commercial internet services), this same broadband network would benefit schools, city and county municipalities and libraries.
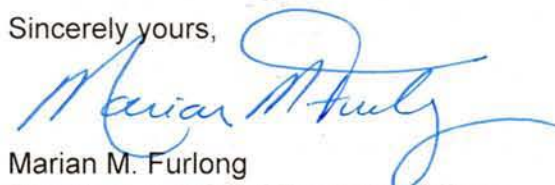
We agree this project will provide Hudson Hospital & Clinics with access to a robust broadband infrastructure allowing us to meet the many challenges of our new information economy.

The broadband funding project provides high speed internet access for our community that will:

- **Advance our community's efforts** in healthcare, education, research, and effective governmental operations.
- **Enhance lifesaving treatment** and the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine and the high speed exchange of critical life-saving medical information.
- **Create local jobs** by keeping support services within the community, generate broadband-related jobs, enhance our community's ability to attract and enable modern competitive businesses that require high performing broadband, and support local business entrepreneurs who require web access.
- **Allow for cost savings** through local network ownership where community shareholders can freely improve network performance and capacity according to demand and to manage the network for continued growth and long-term cost efficiencies.
  Promote community collaboration and efficiency through cost and resource sharing, improved face-to-face and virtual communication, redundant infrastructure and integrated, innovative and accessible services.

We believe this innovative opportunity will provide Wisconsin with the broadband infrastructure to both achieve and sustain economic recovery. With the support of this grant, we look forward to participating in collaborative efforts with partners to develop a robust broadband infrastructure.

Sincerely yours,

Marian M. Furlong
President and Chief Executive Officer
715-531-6000

LETTER OF SUPPORT
for a
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
Grant Application to Support Rural Broadband in Western Wisconsin

January 26, 2010

Memorial Medical Center is an interested partner in the Wisconsin grant application for broadband funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This collaboration is designed to advance the broadband network needs of both the public and private sector in metropolitan cities and rural areas. In addition to providing low cost and secure high quality communications to hospitals and clinics (far beyond commercial internet services), this same broadband network would benefit schools, city and county municipalities and libraries.

We agree this project will provide Memorial Medical Center with access to a robust broadband infrastructure allowing us to meet the many challenges of our new information economy.

The broadband funding project provides high speed internet access for our community that will:

- **Advance our community's efforts** in healthcare, education, research, and effective governmental operations.

- **Enhance lifesaving treatment** and the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine and the high speed exchange of critical life-saving medical information.

- **Create local jobs** by keeping support services within the community, generate broadband-related jobs, enhance our community's ability to attract and enable modern competitive businesses that require high performing broadband, and support local business entrepreneurs who require web access.

- **Allow for cost savings** through local network ownership where community shareholders can freely improve network performance and capacity according to demand and to manage the network for continued growth and long-term cost efficiencies.

- **Promote community collaboration and efficiency** through cost and resource sharing, improved face-to-face and virtual communication, redundant infrastructure and integrated, innovative and accessible services.

We believe this innovative opportunity will provide Wisconsin with the broadband infrastructure to both achieve and sustain economic recovery. With the support of this grant, we look forward to participating in collaborative efforts with partners to develop a robust broadband infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Scott Polenz, CPA, MBA, NHA
Chief Executive Officer
216 Sunset Place
Neillsville, WI 54456
Phone: 715-743-8453

Amery Regional Medical Center

www.amerymedicalcenter.org

265 Griffin Street East
Amery, WI 54001
(715) 268-8000

DIVISIONS OF ARMC

ARMC Rehab Services
220 N Keller Avenue
Amery, WI 54001
(715) 268-1001

Behavioral Health Center
ARMC West Campus
230 Deronda Street
Amery, WI 54001
(715) 268-0060

Clear Lake Clinic
357 Third Avenue
Clear Lake, WI 54005
(715) 263-3100

Luck Medical Clinic
137 First Avenue
Luck, WI 54853
(715) 472-2177

Luck PT & Fitness
2547 State Road 35, Suite 5
Luck, WI 54853
(715) 472-5225

the Fitness Center
220 N Keller Avenue
Amery, WI 54001
(715) 268-1008

Turtle Lake Medical Clinic
550 Martin Avenue
Turtle Lake, WI 54889
(715) 986-4101

Wound Healing Center
ARMC West Campus
230 Deronda Street
Amery, WI 54001
(715) 268-0175

LETTER OF SUPPORT
for a
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
Grant Application to Support Rural Broadband in Western Wisconsin

February 1, 2010

Amery Regional Medical Center is an interested partner in the Wisconsin grant application for broadband funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This collaboration is designed to advance the broadband network needs of both the public and private sector in metropolitan cities and rural areas. In addition to providing low cost and secure high quality communications to hospitals and clinics (far beyond commercial internet services), this same broadband network would benefit schools, city and county municipalities and libraries.

We agree this project will provide Amery Regional Medical Center with access to a robust broadband infrastructure allowing us to meet the many challenges of our new information economy.

The broadband funding project provides high speed internet access for our community that will:

- **Advance our community's efforts** in healthcare, education, research and effective governmental operations.

- **Enhance lifesaving treatment** and the health and wellness of residents in rural areas through telemedicine and the high speed exchange of critical lifesaving medical information.

- **Create local jobs** by keeping support services within the community, generate broadband-related jobs, enhance our community's ability to attract and enable modern competitive businesses that require high performing broadband, and support local business entrepreneurs who require web access.

- **Allow for cost savings** through local network ownership where community shareholders can freely improve network performance and capacity according to demand and to manage the network for continued growth and long-term cost efficiencies.

- **Promote community collaboration and efficiency** through cost and resource sharing, improved face-to-face and virtual communication, redundant infrastructure and integrated, innovative and accessible services.

We believe this innovative opportunity will provide Wisconsin with the broadband infrastructure to both achieve and sustain economic recovery. With the support of this grant, we look forward to participating in collaborative efforts with partners to develop a robust broadband infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Michael Karuschak, Jr., CEO, FACHE
Amery Regional Medical Center
715/268-0300