



COLLEGE
OF THE
REDWOODS

23 March 2010

Sean McLaughlin
Executive Director
Access Humboldt
P.O. Box 157
Eureka, CA 95502

RE: Letter of Commitment for Strategic Partners

Dear Mr. McLaughlin,

On behalf of Redwoods Community College, I am pleased to provide this letter of commitment for Access Humboldt's planned installation of a *Humboldt Community Access Network (HCAN)* under BTOP encompassing Humboldt County and Del Norte County, with a particular emphasis on the most rural areas of our District.

This application's emphasis on reaching beyond current boundaries to many unserved communities is critical not only to regional economic development efforts but also to our distance education efforts in these communities. As a Community College serving a 10,000 square mile rural district, in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties and the Ft. Bragg/Mendocino Coastal Communities, it is imperative that broadband connections be available more widely.

A lack of broadband connections to the majority of our population, and a lack of competitive broadband options in the region, hampers the North Coast's ability to encourage job growth and enhance economic diversity in a region already suffering double-digit unemployment and poverty. In turn this negatively impacts successful training options as employers do not choose to locate here without good connections to the Internet. Though this region is among the poorest in California, it must pay two to three times the cost paid by urban areas in order to receive even the limited bandwidth available to us.

Our current work through the Department of Labor grant emphasizes certificate training in many economic and safety areas, among them are Fire Safety, Emergency Medical Technicians, Water and Wastewater Management, and a variety of rural health occupations. The need for this training is most pronounced in the unserved areas of our District which, for economic reasons, can only be reached through distance education. The ongoing economic crisis affecting our operations and our community means that we will not have budget for private-sector broadband connectivity in the foreseeable future.

Access Humboldt's extensive plan for combining microwave sites, public safety spectrum, and community anchors spectrum and personnel resources is both forward thinking and allows access to our most rural communities that no other current application provides.

If the BTOP funding is awarded for HCAN and we are connected to the middle-mile infrastructure, we commit to the following:

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Eureka, CA 95501-9300
707.476.4100

FAX: 707.476.4400



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- Dedicate staff time to participate on the HCAN Advisory Board.
- Engage in helping to shape the long-term direction of the *Humboldt Community Access Network*.
- Deliver distance education and training programs to remote locations, including fire districts, medical clinics, and other community anchor facilities as the broadband connections permit.
- Deploy our Educational Broadband Service licensed spectrum (Call Sign WND284, FRN 0007515711)
- Increase our efforts to add other broadband wireless or combinations of meshing options to the microwave point-to-point enhancements to provide additional broadband services within the rural communities.
- Include our underserved areas in the Jobs Market initiative that is being implemented in partnership with Humboldt County, Del Norte County and College of the Redwoods. This initiative helps to promote new skills and connections for those seeking employment.

Sincerely,

Maggie Lynch, Ed.D.
Dean, Academic Technology
and Distance Education