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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ICN RECEIVES FEDERAL BROADBAND GRANT

Des Moines, IA (07/8/10) -- Iowa Communications Network (ICN) receives \$16.2 million for broadband infrastructure funding for its "Bridging the Digital Divide for Iowa Communities" grant project.

ICN submitted a Comprehensive Community Infrastructure (CCI) application to the federal Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). The CCI project, proposed during the second round, will enhance the Network to a ten (10) Gbps (gigabytes per second) backbone that would reach all 99 counties in Iowa. This middle mile network advancement will also provide one (1) Gbps of symmetrical Ethernet connectivity to 1,036 education facilities, hospitals, libraries, public safety, workforce development, and other Community Anchor Institutions throughout the state.

ICN's CCI grant included partnering efforts with key anchor institutions throughout Iowa, such as Iowa Health System, Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi, community colleges, and several state agencies. ICN's grant will enable many public and private partnerships to be established, specifically with Iowa's local telecommunication providers.

ICN's Interim Executive Director Dave Lingren said, "The collaboration in this grant is remarkable. There are opportunities for ICN to partner with Iowa's telecommunication providers. By having Iowa's public and private sectors working together, citizens will greatly benefit. That was the overall goal for our grant."

With ICN's grant project, institutions will be able to consider other Internet applications that require large amounts of bandwidth, like transmitting hospital MRIs, video streaming, and web-based applications. These applications will help spur Iowa's economic growth providing the ability to compete in the national and global environments. In addition, ICN's project will also create approximately 100 new jobs.

BTOP was established through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, which is an agency in the U.S. Department of Commerce that was appropriated \$4.7 billion for federal awards to eligible entities. Guidelines for BTOP, created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act), is to expand access to broadband services in the United States by awarding grants for: deploying broadband infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas, enhancing broadband capacity at public computer centers, and promoting sustainable broadband adoption. For more information about BTOP visit www.broadbandusa.gov.

The ICN is the country's premier fiber-optic network, committed to continued enhancement of distance learning and providing Iowans with equal access to education, healthcare, and government through data, voice, and videoconferencing services. For more information about the ICN, visit www.icn.state.ia.us.

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