

Office of the Governor

PO BOX 004
TRENTON, NJ 08625

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Jayne O'Connor
Julie Plocinik
609-777-2600

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Governor Whitman Applauds Approval of First Grants for Technology Infrastructure

Governor Whitman today applauded plans by five higher education institutions to use funds provided through the Higher Education Technology Infrastructure Act to more fully integrate advanced telecommunications and networking technologies into teaching, research, and learning. The proposals were approved this morning by the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education.

"These projects are wonderful examples of how the law I proposed last year enables New Jersey's colleges and universities to address key technology needs," Governor Whitman said. She signed the Higher Education Technology Infrastructure Fund Act into law in September.

The equipment and linkages financed through the fund will give students, faculty, and staff at New Jersey's public and independent colleges and universities increased access to on-line connections, video linkages, high-speed data transmissions, and other technologies.

"I am pleased that these five institutions have moved so quickly to develop plans for using telecommunications and networking technologies to enhance opportunities for student and faculty research, distance learning, job training, and business-higher education partnerships," Governor Whitman said.

"These first proposals, and those that will follow, do not just benefit students and institutions. An integrated higher education technology infrastructure will improve New Jersey's global competitiveness and strengthen the state's economy," she said.

The Higher Education Technology Infrastructure Fund provides \$50 million for development of technology infrastructure at the state's 45 public and independent higher education institutions with a public mission and \$5 million for public library grants and statewide library infrastructure through the New Jersey State Library.

Institutions are at various stages of installing the equipment and wiring needed to support intercampus communication and on-line connections to the Internet, other higher education institutions, libraries, and other data sources. The fund will help each institution to address its priority technology infrastructure needs.

Colleges and universities are required to match the state contribution, ensuring that the technology fund will leverage investment of over \$100 million in higher education technology infrastructure.

"Approving these first projects under the Higher Education Technology Infrastructure Fund is an important step toward addressing New Jersey's higher education technology needs and meeting the challenges of the new millennium," said Alfred Cade, chairman of the Commission on Higher Education.

The Commission today approved \$4.3 million in grant funds for projects at five institutions valued at over \$8.9 million:

The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey (Pomona) was granted \$1,245,000 for three projects to upgrade voice communications, data and video communications, and communications infrastructure. The proposal includes high speed data links to all campus facilities, video communications services in student residential centers, and new fiber and copper wiring. **Total cost: \$2,616,000.**

Rowan University (Glassboro) was granted \$1,605,000 to improve and expand the video, voice, and data network on campus. The proposal includes the addition of four classrooms with a full array of media equipment and computer technology, additional networked microcomputer workstations for faculty and students, and extension of the campus "backbone" to unserved classrooms and offices. **Total cost: \$3,210,000.**

Ocean County College (Toms River) was granted \$694,436 to install a fiber optic ring connecting all 15 buildings on campus and internal wiring for each of the buildings; the college will also purchase network interface devices. **Total cost: \$1,506,869.**

Centenary College (Hackettstown) was granted \$252,243 to provide each full-time faculty member and resident student with a computer, expand and enhance computer laboratories for commuter students, and establish complete Internet service for all campus computers and dial-up access for off-campus members of the college community. **Total cost: \$593,043.**

Fairleigh Dickinson University (Madison/Teaneck) was granted \$481,917 to upgrade equipment in student computer laboratories, classrooms, libraries, and specialized programs, and to increase the number of network-capable computers available to faculty. **Total cost: \$984,000**

The Commission is required to approve each institution's proposed use of grant funds. Once approved by the Commission, the project is forwarded to the New Jersey Educational Facilities Authority, which issues bonds and administers the technology infrastructure fund.