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Colorado Department of Education

Centennial State Libraries

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Library Technology Access Project Pilots Accessibility at Libraries

The Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA) of the American Library Association (ALA) is partnering with Hewlett-Packard (HP) on creation of an innovative project called Library Technology Access (LTA). The goal of LTA is to increase accessibility within public and academic libraries for our patrons with disabilities.

LTA will be piloted in six libraries (two academic and four public) with installation of a technology solution that will enable people with visual, hearing, mobility, and learning disabilities to have access to computer workstations. HP has developed the accessible workstation solution, with feedback given by representatives of national disability organizations and ALA members at last month's conference in Atlanta.

The LTA application, which is due at HP via fax or e-mail by September 3, 2002, can be found on the web.

Community Connect Broadband Grant Program Initiated

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has a new pilot grant program to increase the availability of broadband transmission services in rural areas. For fiscal year 2002, $20 million in grants will be made available through a national competition to

applicants proposing to provide broadband transmission service on a "community-oriented connectivity" basis. The "community-oriented connectivity" approach will target rural, economically-challenged communities and offer a means for the deployment of broadband transmission services to rural schools, libraries, education centers, health care providers, law enforcement agencies, public safety organizations as well as residents and businesses. This all-encompassing connectivity concept will give small, rural communities a chance to benefit from the advanced technologies that are necessary to foster economic growth, provide quality education and health care opportunities, and increase and enhance public safety efforts.   All applications must be delivered to RUS or bear postmark no later than November 5, 2002.

Technology Planning Resources Offered for Tech Plans

Schools and libraries need to have completed technology plans on file once they accept funds for the E-rate program. Technology plans may be approved for up to three years. The Colorado State Library (CSL) has a list of libraries with up-to-date approved Technology Plans on file at CSL. Schools can find out the status of their technology plan by contacting Gabriela Perez in the CDE Educational Telecommunications Unit , (303)-866-6850. Feel free to download, modify, and use the Technology Planning templates online.

Colorado's @your library Advocacy Campaign Begins First Phase

The Colorado Association of Libraries (CAL) has launched the first phases of Colorado's @your library Advocacy Campaign. The Initiative (Coach/Player) Project is recruiting ten libraries as "players" to be matched with ten libraries as "coaches" or mentors. Coach libraries will have expertise in some arena of advocacy, while player libraries should wish to receive training, mentoring, and support over the period of approximately a year, to provide intensive advocacy and initiative training based on detailed strategy.

The 20 libraries will reflect the diversity and variety of types and sizes of libraries in the state. Both partners in each team will deliver at least one advocacy activity each by fall 2003. Activities may range from promoting a service to launching a media effort to organizing development efforts.

Colorado's @your library campaign will enhance awareness of and support for libraries by increasing their visibility and bringing renewed energy to the promotion of libraries. Three projects will build sustainable marketing and public relations expertise – the Initiative (Coach/Player) Project, Public Relations Training, and a statewide Positioning and Visibility Project--under the leadership of the Colorado Association of Libraries, and with the involvement of an Advisory Committee with members from all types and locations of libraries.

For information on the campaign, see the CAL web site.

U.K. Libraries Jump Into the Net Without Controversy

By the end of this year, the U.K. hopes to have all the country's more than 4,000 libraries linked to the Internet. The project, dubbed People's Network, is expected to cost over 100 million pounds and will result in 30,000 installed terminals "stuffed with digital delights." Libraries have proven to be the natural place to get people online. More than 60 percent of the population holds a library card and book borrowing is five times more popular than going to a professional soccer match. To help patrons get familiarized with the technology, many libraries are offering starter courses, like Internet for the Terrified, and online clubs. Thus far, the project has been controversy-free, unlike similar library projects in the U.S. which have been "dogged by the three F's: filtering, free speech and filth." The United Kingdom does not have a guarantee of free speech and is thus letting local discretion decide the issue. [SOURCE: Wired News, AUTHOR: Daithí Ó hAnluain]

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