

# Michaud Announces Release of Federal Funding for Distance Learning Education and Medical Assistance

Thursday, September 18 2008

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"I am pleased that the Office of Rural Development has released this important funding," said Michaud. "These grants will fund projects that help connect our communities. Furthering health care and educational needs in rural parts of our state, the distance learning and telemedicine projects funded through these grants will further economic development in ways that would not otherwise be possible."

Spring

Harbor Hospital

(\$51,850): Funds will be used to establish a telepsychiatry project in rural Maine.

The project will provide residents having a primary or secondary diagnosis of mental illness access to mental healthcare that is not currently available in rural areas (based in Westbrook, serves Cumberland, Lincoln, and Oxford Counties).

Regional

School Unit One (\$420,548): Funds

will be used for advanced distance learning technology to achieve academic goals and improve student achievement in alignment with the State of Maine Learning Results.

RSU One will facilitate the development of an environment in which students will thrive, increasing their access to the information age (based in Bath, serves Sagadahoc, York, Aroostook, Washington, Piscataquis, and Penobscot Counties).

Maine School Administration District 52 (\$425,118):

Funds will be used by MSAD 52 for a distance learning project that will utilize videoconferencing to bring enriching, horizon-expanding experiences for young children through virtual field trips, collaborative learning exercises, and other activities via this technology (based in Turner, serves Kennebec, Androscoggin, Aroostook, Somerset, and Washington counties).

Maine School Administration District 19 (\$385,165):

Funds will be used by MSAD 19 to install high definition interactive IP-based video conferencing for classroom environment (based in Lubec, serves York, Sagadahoc, Somerset, Washington, Aroostook, Piscataquis, and Penobscot counties).

Association of Computer Technology Educators of

Maine (\$373,823): Funds will be used for an educational distance learning project between Association of Computer Technology Educators of Maine and partner K-12 schools in the entire state of Maine (based in Wells, serves Androscoggin, Aroostook, Cumberland, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, Penobscot, and Piscataquis counties).

Franklin

Memorial Hospital

(\$100,000): Funds will be used to support the FMH Franklin Virtual ICU. The ICU will allow 24/7 electronic monitoring of patient conditions, patients will receive constant surveillance by specialists who will have access to patient information needed to intervene quickly and accurately (based in Farmington, serves Franklin county).

Rangeley School Department (\$349,330): Funds

will be used by Rangeley School Department in collaboration with other Maine School Administrative Districts to establish a distance learning teleconferencing system. This system will provide high quality advanced coursework as well as technical training for students and offer teachers expanded professional development options (based in Rangeley, serves Franklin and Aroostook counties).

According to the USDA, the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program is specifically designed to meet the educational and health care needs of rural America through the use of advanced telecommunications technologies. With DLT grants, loans, and loan-grant combinations, rural communities enjoy enhanced educational opportunities, improved healthcare services and greater economic development. The DLT program helps to build community partnerships that provide both the infrastructure needed to reach the schoolhouse or clinic door and the equipment required inside that door.

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