Memo

To: Kris Schmitz, Central   **To:**   Montana State Library Commission
          Services Manager

From: Donci Bardash, Project Director   **From:** Kris Schmitz, Central
          Broadband Technology   Services Manager
          Opportunities Program (BTOP)

Date: September 21, 2011

Re: MSL Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) Public Computing
          Center Grant (PCC) Update

I.   Significant Accomplishments

a. **Broadband:** Broadband upgrades have begun at seventeen (17) public libraries.
Miles City Public Library was the first to upgrade with BTOP assistance. Though
MSL had originally projected that 29 libraries would need financial assistance
upgrading services, this number decreased significantly, primarily due to market
conditions. Broadband service providers have rolled out new fiber, faster speeds,
and reduced costs in many communities. A handful of libraries were automatically
upgraded by their vendor from 1.5 mbps (download speeds) up to 6 mbps
(download speeds) without any additional costs to libraries. Others have upgraded
with nominal increased monthly fees.

Measure	Baseline	Current	Goal (6/30/2013)
% With Download Speeds > 1.5 mbps	76%	93%	86%
Average Statewide Download Speed	3.5 mbps	10.14 mbps	21 mbps

b. **BTOP Technology Training:** Libraries are currently completing an on-line survey relating to technology training needs. The survey will close at the end of September and will be used to prioritize training topics. BTOP has formed a technology training advisory group, comprised of trainers at local public libraries and coordinated by the BTOP Technology Trainer, to advise on training topics, training competencies on public computer center management, and to provide peer-to-peer training.

c. **Patron Survey:** Results of the patron survey have been posted online. This information has been useful to libraries and community partners in prioritizing patron services and training workshops.

d. **Accessibility Upgrades:** Lincoln County- Eureka has completed converting their restroom to be wheelchair accessible.

e. **Web Junction:** MSL has secured a two-year contract for Web Junction Services. However, due to a substantial internal redesign of their website and structure, services will not launch until January. Detailed instructions will be sent to both BTOP and non-BTOP libraries in December.

f. **WoW Bus:** Missoula Public Library completed renovations of their mobile computer center, hired two library staff for the bus, and began promoting services. The bus will be featured at the fall workshop on September 24th.

g. **Partners:** We have executed Memoranda of Understand with all seven (7) community and agency partners. Partners have been engaged with both outreach and training efforts. The BTOP Technology Trainer has met with each partner and developed a plan for rolling out training to librarians on their Internet resources, with a goal to provide the knowledge and skills to assist patrons with common questions relating to legal issues, healthcare, education, employment, and statistics.

h. **Directory Statistics:** In conjunction with Statewide Library Services, data fields have been added to the statewide directory, giving library directors an opportunity to highlight: public wireless access, number of computer stations, laptops,

children's computers, teen computers, adjustable-height desks, low-vision computer stations, blind-patron computer stations, and social media sites (such as a library Facebook page). This data will connect with an application on the campaign website.

i. **Performance Measure Highlights**: We have exceeded our project goal by installing 644 new public computers statewide. More than 26,000 patrons have received technology assistance or training, including one-on-one training and workshops. Library staff spent nearly 7,000 hours assisting patrons one-on-one. Popular topics include computer basics, genealogy, career development and job searching.

II. Planned Activities

a. **E-rate:** E-rate Elite will complete an analysis of each BTOP library to determine opportunities for getting the most out of E-rate by the end of October. This will assist libraries and MSL with submission of E-rate documents during the winter and spring filing window. MSL will contract with outside vendors to assist libraries with filing. We are currently working with the State Procurement Office to post a Request for Proposal for application assistance services and training on E-rate forms, which are projected to begin in November.

b. **Outreach:** The BTOP Outreach Committee has met twice and enthusiastically approved the comprehensive outreach plan. The plan includes 18 months of television and radio ads, newspaper ads, a website and print materials. The theme is "Library.Next", which positions public libraries as cutting-edge community anchors, tapped into new technology and responsive to community needs. The tag line is "Tame the Wild, Wild Web." The production company will film at the Carnegie Public Library in Anaconda using local patrons. The campaign will launch the last week of October. Tool kits, including all print materials, will be mailed to BTOP libraries; electronic copies of all materials will be available to any public library for reproduction. Bookmarks will be direct

mailed to public schools for distribution among 3rd and 10th graders. We encourage libraries to promote services with open houses during the fall.

c. **Responding to Changing Needs:** MSL continues to give libraries the opportunity to request additional hardware, software, and services to support their computer centers. As funds are available, items within the scope of the grant are approved. In the next month, MSL will purchase reservation, time and print management systems for nine libraries. This will assist with cost recovery, as well computer assignments.