

Memorandum

To: Montana State Library Commission
From: Jennie Stapp, State Librarian
Date: July 24, 2013
Re: **Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) Final Report**

In July 2010 the State Library received \$1.829 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act monies from the United State Department of Commerce to support a three-year Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP). The State Library also received \$665,000 in matching funds to support the grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The purpose of the program was to develop and enhance public computing centers in 42 public libraries in Montana, reaching 86% of Montana citizens. Under the grant, the State Library hired three staff to administer the program, a project director, a compliance officer, and technology trainer. Through their efforts and with oversight and support from the State Library's Central Services office, the BTOP program met or exceeded the following purposes and objectives:

National statutory purposes:

- 1) provide improved access to broadband service to consumers residing in underserved areas of the country;
- 2) provide broadband education, awareness, training, access, equipment, and support to libraries; and,
- 3) stimulate the demand for broadband, economic growth, and job creation.

BTOP objectives:

- 1) increase broadband speeds at participating libraries up to 21 mbps;
- 2) cut wait times in half by increasing the total number of workstations and expanding library operation hours
- 3) improve access by purchasing ADA compliant software, hardware, and furniture, and through minor renovation projects aimed at increasing accessibility of computing center facilities;
- 4) offer courses to increase computer literacy; and
- 5) provide Internet and library resources to rural Montana using a mobile computer lab.

The BTOP program concluded on June 30, 2013. The State Library is pleased to share with the Commission the Final BTOP report that highlights the accomplishments of the program. Also included with the report are examples of fact sheets that were prepared for each participating library. These fact sheets highlight local achievements and are intended to serve as communication tools for librarians and their local stakeholders.