



Committed to the future of rural communities.

Tennessee—Rural Housing Service

Rural Broadband Access

Statewide Library Initiative Aids Rural Communities, workers & businesses

Outline Of Need:

Nearly 80 percent of rural public libraries in Tennessee provide the only free public access to the Internet in communities with some of the highest unemployment rates and lowest rates of home Internet access.

How Rural Development Helped:

Rural Development invested \$350,000 in grant funding to assist two state agencies in adding and expanding computer labs with free public Internet access in 70 rural libraries across the state.

The Results:

A partnering between RD and the Tenn. Department of Economic and Community Development, State Library and Archives, and the Office of the Secretary of State is investing more than \$1.2 mil. to create or expand computer resources and free public Internet access at libraries that serve more than a million rural Tennesseans.



70 public libraries across the state provide access to workforce development and expanded educational opportunities for more than a million Tennesseans.

The partnership increased the capacity of these key community facilities to assist the unemployed and underemployed with job searches, job applications and training to help them acquire better jobs. Beyond meeting immediate needs, these facilities will now have the capacity to provide additional business development services and provide workforce training and expanded educational opportunities.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said, “This Recovery Act investment in our Nations libraries will serve rural America for generations to come.”

Improving access to advanced Internet-based job and business tools, in many cases for the first time, also increases demand for broadband services as businesses and workers learn how to take advantage of the economic opportunities high speed Internet service can bring right to their doorstep.

“Working together we have the unique opportunity to increase the ability of rural Tennesseans and rural communities to compete in the 21st Century Marketplace,” said RD State Director Bobby Goode.

Fast Facts

Program: Community Facilities

Investment: \$350,000 Grant

Partners: TN Dept. of Economic & Community Development
Tennessee State Library & Archives
Office of the Tennessee Secretary of State

Demographics • > 1 million rural Tennesseans
• 64 counties
• Low income / high unemployment areas

Impact: • 70 computer labs created or expanded
• Increased education & training opportunities
• Increased demand for home broadband service