



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT AWARDS \$296,638 FOR THE DISTANCE LEARNING AND TELEMEDICINE PROGRAM

TEMPLE, TEXAS, October 5, 2006— Bryan Daniel, State Director of Texas USDA Rural Development, today announced the selection of Region 9 Education Service Center as a recipient of the Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Grant Program.

The DLT funds will be used to purchase a hub site bridge, audio visual equipment, and 16 portable distance learning systems. The purpose of this project is to enable rural area schools to have the technology necessary to have educational content and services delivered to them through video conferencing and electronic field trips. The project will serve approximately 16,597 students on 73 Texas campuses.

“Distance learning and telemedicine systems are powerful tools for rural Texas,” said Daniel. “Through technology, students and families can participate in classes not previously available to them, and people who live in rural areas can access expanded health care options.”

In Fiscal Year 2005, Texas was awarded nearly \$2.5 million to be distributed through the Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program. The education projects helped schools provide students with advanced educational tools. Distance learning projects provide funding for computers and internet connections in schools and libraries. The vast array of study options available to rural students through distance learning technologies literally brings the world to their doorstep. Telemedicine projects are providing new and improved healthcare services beginning with patient diagnosis, through surgical procedures, and post-operative treatment.

USDA Rural Development strives to see that rural citizens can participate fully in the global economy by providing technical assistance, funding, and other programs that help rural Americans build strong economies to improve their quality of life. For further information regarding USDA Rural Development Programs, contact the State Office at (254) 742-9700 or visit our website at <http://rurdev.usda.gov/tx/>.

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