



DLT Awards - Louisiana

2010 Grant Awards

Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals

\$498,424

Louisiana

Counties: Claiborne, Grant, Red River, Sabine, Webster, Allen, Caldwell, Catahoula, Concordia, East Carrol, Franklin, Jackson, Rapides, Tensas, Union, West Carroll, East Feliciana, St. Helena, and St. Landry.

Contact: Mr. Michael Austin, (225) 342-8507

Fleming, 4th Dist.; Alexander, 5th Dist.; Cassidy, 6th Dist.; and Boustany, 7th Dist.

The grant will be used to purchase video teleconferencing equipment for 20 rural parish health units that will extend the department's ability to provide individual counseling and nutritional education to high risk individuals through programs offered to mothers and their small children. The RUS funds will build upon and complement an FCC Pilot Program which funded the underpinning data connectivity for the new DLT-funded interactive video equipment.

2007 Grant Awards

LHC Group, Inc.

Louisiana

\$162,993

Area Served: Acadia Parish

Contact: Dr. Heidi Toerner

Telephone: 337-781-9648

Fax: 817-479-3716

Congressional District: Boustany, Jr.

DLT funding will be utilized to provide continuous health care monitoring to patients in the rural area of Acadia Parish in Southwestern Louisiana. In this project 75 patients will be monitored at random times from their homes by agency nurses working in a home health agency in Church Point. Nurses will monitor patients vital signs, glucose levels, oxygenation, weight, and other parameters that will allow early medical interventions.

Hospital Service District No. 1 of Pointe Coupee, LA, Inc

Louisiana

\$372,670

Area Served: Pointe Coupee Parish (part); Pointe Coupee Parish (part)

Contact: Chad Olinde



Telephone: 225-638-5701

Fax: 225-638-5846

Congressional District: LA-5 Alexander; LA-6 Baker

Rural Development funding will be used for a telemedicine project where medical professionals across Pointe Coupee Parish are able to provide quality care in a timely manner to rural patients. The project will include a HealthCare professional portal which will allow for remote access to the current Hospital Information System and the proposed PACS system. This system will allow providers access to CT scans, MRI, ultrasound, and traditional X-ray images which will enable treatment to be started in a timely fashion for the patient.

Sabine Parish School Board

Louisiana

\$252,491

Area Served: Sabine Parish

Contact: Debra S. Lee

Telephone: 319-256-9228

Fax: 319-256-0169

Congressional District: LA-4 McCrery

The proposed system will be composed of video and web based technologies. The system will include state-of-the-art multimedia, video, teleconferencing classrooms that will be connected using dedicated T1s as well as Metro Ethernet circuits to facilitate transmission between the parish end points and the University as well as other partner sites. With this project the district will be able to secure video broadcast servers, video conferencing and/or production units based on their needs as well as video content and access to on-line college courses at eleven exceptionally rural public schools. This project is a district wide collaboration that will serve approximately 23,000 rural residents. Services include electronic field trips for elementary students, provide advance course work and dual credit courses for secondary students, provide professional development in core content subjects for elementary staff members, and provide extended learning opportunities for rural community members.

2006 Grant Awards

Amedisys, Inc.

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

\$500,000

Areas Served: LA- Ascension, E. Baton Rouge, LaFourche, Rapides; AL-Bibb, Clarke, Fayette, Lowndes, Madison, Marshall, Mobile, Pickens; GA-Chattoga, Dade, Fannin, Franklin, Gilmer, Habersham, Hart, , Franklin, Morgan, Peach, Rabun, Schley, Towns, Union; FL-Citrus; OK-Caddo, Lincoln, Murray, Seminole; TN-Bledsoe,



Claiborne, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson, Fentress, Overton, Putnam, Roane, Scott, Smith, Unicoi; MS-Covington

Contact: Mrs. Martha S. Williams

Telephone: 225-248-6239

Fax: 225-248-6236

Congressional District: LA-03, 05, 06; AL-01, 02, 04, 05, 07; FL-05; GA-03, 09, 10; PL-03, 04, 05; TN-01, 03, 04, 06, 07

Rural Development funds will be used to implement the Rural Telehealth Point of Care Delivery project that focuses on minimizing barriers to high quality health care for rural elderly patients throughout the south. The home health care project will benefit over 400,000 residents in 42 rural cities and towns.

Louisiana Resource Center for Educators

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

\$122,015

Areas Served: Bossier, DeSoto, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Jackson, Point Coupee, Richland, St. John

Contact: Ms. Nancy S. Roberts

Telephone: 225-924-7600

Fax: 225-924-3098

Congressional District: LA-03, 04, 05, 06

Rural Development funds will be used to purchase distance learning equipment and content for eight high schools in rural Louisiana. This project will provide advanced placement courses offered by LSU in Baton Rouge and virtual field trips offered throughout the United States. Educators will be able to participate in alternative certification programs and professional development workshops and qualified community members and college students trying to obtain a teaching career can receive assistance in passing Praxis exams.

2004 Grant Awards:

Primary Care Providers for a Healthy Feliciana

Clinton, Louisiana

\$500,000

Area(s) served: East Feliciana Parish

Contact: Dawn Taylor, 225-683-5292; Fax: 225-683-4354

Congressional District(s): LA-06

Primary Care Providers will create a local area network (LAN) within RKM-Primary Care to provide specialty medical services for rural residents, and electronic patient records storage and accessibility for physicians and hospitals at three end-user sites. The project will also upgrade and expand the existing teleradiology program. The project will



serve 21,360 patients in an area of approximately 1000 square miles in East Feliciana Parish.

2003 Grant Awards:

Hospital Service District No. 2 of LaSalle Parish; Jena, LA

\$262,000

Area(s) Served: LaSalle, Catahoula, and Grant Parishes

Contact: Mary Moffett (318) 992-9200; Fax: (318) 992-9245

Congressional District(s): 4th and 5th

Hospital Service District No. 2 will utilize RUS funding in a telemedicine project to provide teleradiology services to LaSalle General Hospital and to two rural health clinics in Jonesville and Pollock, LA. The project will also incorporate transmission of X-ray procedures, CT scans, ultrasound, and nuclear medicine procedures as well and connect three end user sites to radiologists in Rapids General Hospital in Alexandria, LA. This project will serve over 20,000 residents in three parishes.

2002 Award:

Primary Care Providers for a Healthy Feliciana; Clinton, LA

\$67,360 Grant

Area(s) Served: East Feliciana Parish Community of Clinton

Contact: Ginger A. Hunt (225) 683-5292; Fax: (225) 683-4354

Congressional District(s): Applicant 6th / Project 6th

The Primary Care Providers for a Healthy Feliciana will use RUS grant funds to establish a teleradiology system for rural residents of East Feliciana Parish. The parish has struggled, unsuccessfully, for years to fill a radiologist position. Currently, patients wait ten days or more to get results for routine x-rays and the ability for quick turn around on urgent requests is nonexistent. To solve this problem three small clinics in the town of Clinton are joining together to sponsor this grant which will provide for more timely results on x-rays as well as ultrasound and bone density tests. Funding of this project will result in limiting the severity and exacerbation of symptoms, decreased loss of work, decreased hospital admissions and decreased costs of health care. Doctor Rathbone, the main physician in the town of Clinton, will perform the radiology tests and immediately transmit the results to one of two diagnostic centers. The diagnostic facility will provide results while the patient waits in Doctor Rathbone's office. The total number of rural residents served by this project is 17,000.



2001 Grant Awards:

Union General Hospital; Farmerville, Louisiana

\$69,600 Grant

Area(s) Served: Union Parish

Contact: Ms. Evalyn Ormond; (318) 368-9751; FAX: (318) 368-3915

Congressional District: 5th

Union General Hospital is a private non-profit 35-bed hospital located in Farmerville in northern Louisiana. Union General Hospital provides general medical services to a 100% rural area serving approximately 11,580 people in the hospital service area that includes a 40-mile radius around the town of Farmerville. Farmerville with a population of 1,900, is the largest town in the hospital service area. Union General Hospital has been unable to attract and finance a licensed radiologist and has only been able to offer image reading diagnostic services in a limited manner. At present, one x-ray technician serves Union General Hospital. Once the x-ray is taken, it must be transported to a tertiary care facility for a radiology reading. Through the use of RUS grant funds, along with matching funds, Union General Hospital will provide teleradiology services. Teleradiology equipment will be purchased and installed so that the x-ray technician can link with the existing teleradiology network located at the Lincoln General Hospital in Ruston, Louisiana. Lincoln General Hospital will serve as the hub site for this project and in conjunction with Union General Hospital is also providing matching funds to extend the reach of clinical services to the remote communities of northeastern Louisiana.



East Carroll Parish Hospital; Lake Providence, Louisiana

\$100,100 Grant

Area(s) Served: East Carroll Parish

Contact: Ms. Ladonna Englerth; (318) 559-4023; Fax: (318) 559-3761

Congressional District: 5th

East Carroll Parish Hospital (ECPH) is a small, 29 bed acute care hospital that has been in operation since 1955 in Lake Providence in East Carroll Parish. A radiologist is on staff one morning each week. All other times, x-ray films must be transported 65 miles to be interpreted by a radiologist. The goal of this project is to form a radiology network to share radiologists for on-site needs and to provide 24-hour teleradiology service by 2002. ECPH will link with the hub located at Richardson Medical Center, a 49 bed acute care hospital, in Rayville. Rural residents requiring medical attention will be benefit from faster x-ray interpretations, reduced unnecessary transfers and increased staff availability. This project will benefit approximately 2,981 residents.

2000 Grant Awards:

ALLEN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD, Oberlin, Allen Parish, Louisiana

\$58,206 Grant

Area(s) served: Allen, Beauregard, Vernon and Rapides Parishes

Contact: David Hooper, (337) 639-4311; FAX: (337) 639-2346

Congressional Districts: 7th and 8th

ALLEN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD, Oberlin, Allen Parish, Louisiana

\$58,206 Grant

Area(s) served: Allen, Beauregard, Vernon and Rapides Parishes

Contact: David Hooper, (337) 639-4311; FAX: (337) 639-2346

Congressional Districts: 7th and 8th

Allen Parish School Board is a charter member and fiscal agent for a consortium known as Project Live. Project Live was incorporated in 1994 and organized to improve educational and cultural opportunities and to increase academic achievement. In 1997 - 1998, Project Live in collaboration with Cameron/Elizabeth Telephone Company, developed an interactive distance learning network with five K-12 regional schools. This application is for Project Live-Phase Two. The existing infrastructure will be expanded to connect at the state level with Bell South/McNeese State University/DeRidder High School. This link will allow rural residents to connect with a university that is currently connected to all state universities administered under the Universities of Louisiana System. The rural schools and communities will have access to many educational opportunities including advanced and specialized classes, professional development, vocational training and higher education. Approximately 2,470 students and many



community members will benefit from this project. An estimated \$200,000 will be saved per year.

ALLEN PARISH SCHOOL BOARD, Oberlin, Allen Parish, Louisiana

\$58,206 Grant

Area(s) served: Allen, Beauregard, Vernon and Rapides Parishes

Contact: David Hooper, (337) 639-4311; FAX: (337) 639-2346

Congressional Districts: 7th and 8th

Louisiana State University Health Science Center, Shreveport, Louisiana

\$107,998 Grant

Area(s) served: Natchitoches, Sabine and Vernon Parishes

Contact: Dr. Ike Muslow, (318) 675-5240; FAX: (318) 675-5081

Congressional District: 4th

The Louisiana State University Health Science Center (LSUHSC) proposes to enhance its health care telecommunication network by utilizing two-way Interactive Compressed Video labs already established in LSUHSC. The proposal will add three (3) satellite locations in the cities of Leesville, Many, and Natchitoches. These end-user sites will have fully equipped two-way Interact Compressed Video labs comparable to those at LSUHSC. The project will utilize an electronic communication network for the transmission of data on health promotion, disease prevention and diagnosis. The project will serve over 27,000 residents and will provide instant access of patients to doctors, aid in the transfer of patient information, diagnostic consultations and provide continuing education to medical professionals.

MACON RIDGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REGION INCORPORATED, Ferriday, Louisiana

\$82,003 Grant

Area(s) served: Concordia Parish

Contact: Mr. Patrick Landers, (318) 757-3033; FAX: (318) 757-4212

Congressional District: 5th

Macon Ridge Economic Development Region plans to provide an opportunity to underprivileged and poverty stricken people in Concordia Parish to attain their GED after work hours. Through the cooperative efforts of the Boys and Girls Club located in Ferriday, they plan to provide a computer lab in that facility for Internet connections to accommodate children after school with computer and tutoring classes via the Internet. Through the Internet connection, Macon Ridge will subscribe for educational connections through colleges and universities in Northern Louisiana (Shreveport, Monroe, Alexandria) for continuing education credits. The end-user sites, the Boys and Girls Club of the Delta and the United Hands Youth Club, are located in Ferriday. It is estimated that



the project will be available to approximately 25,000 people located in Ferriday, Monterey, Vidalia, Waterproof, Clayton, Jonesville, Harrisonburg, and St. Joseph, Louisiana.

1999 Award:

Ville Platte Medical Center, Ville Platte, Louisiana

\$62,573 Grant

Counties Served: Evangeline Parish

Contact: Christopher T. Vidrine, (318) 363-9489; Fax (318) 363-9488

The Ville Platte Medical Center (Ville Platte) is a private non-profit medical facility that offers comprehensive healthcare services, including 24-hour full service Emergency Care. They have formed a network known as the Evangeline Parish Community Care Network that is comprised of 36 partners at 60 sites. Members of the network include active physicians on staff at the Hospital, mental health agencies, schools (public and private), a council on aging, pharmacies, the Office of Public Health, the home health agency, the agriculture extension agency, a nursing home, an alcohol and drug abuse clinic, a technical college, and a chiropractic clinic. The area to be served has an approximate population of 33,000 people of whom 62% live in 200% of poverty with a per capita income of only \$7,041. The proposed project is for both distance learning and telemedicine. However, the predominant use will be for telemedicine. Ville Platte plans to use RUS grant funds to link the network through televideo in order to provide telemedicine services in community-based locations such as homes, mental health centers, nursing homes, senior citizen housing, schools, centers for the developmentally disabled, in addition to providing telemedicine services in physician's offices and hospitals. The network will also provide educational components, including the delivery of literacy and wellness programs and medical research information, to improve education and training opportunities.

1998 Awards:

Allen Parish Hospital

\$105,000 Grant

Location: Kinder, Louisiana

Area(s) served: Lake Charles, Calcasieu, Kinder, and Allen Parish

Contact Ms. Deidra Dunnigan

Telephone Number: (318) 738-9425

Fax Number: (318) 738-2420

Congressional District(s): 7th.

Allen Parish Hospital is a 49-bed community owned hospital located in the flat, rural area of rice and soybean farming in southwest Louisiana. This public, non-profit hospital has a completely rural service area with a 20-mile radius. RUS grant funds will purchase the



teleradiology and telecommunications equipment, and also develop a telecommunications system to establish a consultative/diagnostic link to a 24-hour radiology service at St. Patrick's Hospital of Lake Charles, Louisiana located approximately thirty-five miles southwest of Kinder.

Northwestern State University of Louisiana

\$350,000 Grant

Location: Natchitoches, Louisiana

Area(s) served: Parishes of Concordia, Grant, La Salle, Natchitoches, and Vernon

Contact Dr. William Hunt

Telephone Number: (318) 357-5222

Fax Number: (318) 357-5250

Congressional Districts: 4th, 5th.

Northwestern State University of Louisiana is a four-year institution of higher education that serves mainly rural parishes which are below poverty level and have high unemployment and a lack of educational resources. The university plans to establish a distance learning facility in Concordia, Grant, LaSalle, Natchitoches, and Vernon Parishes. The system will have five end-user sites with K-12 classes, higher education, job training, and life-long learning. The system will also provide Internet access at the end-user sites and increase the service capacity of the existing hub site located on the main campus of Northwestern State University of Louisiana.

Louisiana State University in Shreveport

\$150,000 Grant

Location: Shreveport, Louisiana

Area(s) served: Parishes of Bienville, Catahoula, DeSoto, Madison, and Webster

Contact Mr. Harold Ledford

Telephone Number: (318) 795-4229

Fax Number: (318) 798-4178

Congressional District: 4th.

The proposed project will enhance existing telemedicine and distance learning systems and link them together. This will provide needed healthcare, medical professional education, job-related training and continuing education opportunities for five parishes. The predominant use of the requested project will be telemedicine. The goals of the proposal are to enhance both: (1) the existing telemedicine system by increasing the rural network with two additional receiving sites; and (2) the statewide Louisiana State University compressed video network by implementing a rural network that initially consists of three user-receiving sites.



Louisiana State University Medical Center

\$344,000 Grant

Location: New Orleans, Louisiana

Area(s) served: Parishes of Acadia, Washington, St. Helena, St. James, Tangipahoa and Orleans

Contact Richard Ferrans, MD

Telephone Number: (504) 897-9355

Fax Number: (504) 588-3938

Congressional District(s): 7th, 1st, 6th, 3rd, 2nd.

The Louisiana State University Medical Center has received a grant on behalf of the TeleTrauma Network of Louisiana. Currently, there is no networking of the smaller hospitals and the trauma centers of the state. The TeleTrauma Network will give immediate access to the rural hospitals to an accepting facility with the resources necessary to care for the injured. The hospitals taking part in this project are Lalie Kemp Hospital, Acadia St. Landry Hospital, Riverside Parish Hospital, St. Helena Parish Hospital, St. James Parish Hospital, and the Medical Center of Louisiana at New Orleans (hub site). This TeleTrauma Network will reduce the death and disability rate from trauma in rural Louisiana by providing instant access to trauma surgeons, orthopedic and neurosurgeons, emergency room physicians and other specialists; providing 24 hour teleradiology to support trauma and emergency care; providing logistical support in arranging prompt ambulance and helicopter services and providing continuing education for physicians and nurses specifically geared towards improving clinical skills for trauma and emergency care.

Lady of the Sea General Hospital

\$58,747 Grant / \$62,401 Loan

Total: \$121,148

Location: Cut Off, Louisiana

Area(s) served: Parishes of Orleans and Lafourche

Contact: Lane Cheramie

Telephone Number: (504) 632-6401

Fax Number: (504) 632-8263

Congressional District: 3rd.

The Lady of the Sea General Hospital has received a loan/grant combination. Joining Lady of the Sea General Hospital in this venture is Oschner Foundation Hospital in New Orleans and St. Ann's Hospital in Raceland. Cut Off and Raceland are areas that have a significant health professional shortage and are very remote areas. As a result of this project, the residents of Lafourche Parish will have greater access to quality healthcare and diagnosis. Lady of the Sea General Hospital and St. Ann's Hospital will be able to access national telecardiology diagnoses and educational training via telemedicine link to Oschner Foundation Hospital in New Orleans. These rural residents will be able to



receive earlier diagnosis and treatment and healthcare professionals will benefit by having enhanced educational opportunities and specialty support.

1997 Awards:

Ascension Parish Library

Award: \$81,297 Loan / \$78,703 Grant

Total: \$160,000

Location: Gonzales, Louisiana

Area(s) Served: Parish of Ascension

Contact Person: Angelle Deshautelles

Telephone Number: 504-647-8924

FAX Number: 504-644-0063

Ascension Parish Library (Ascension) is a public library system supported by parish wide property taxes. Ascension Library seeks to expand its services to the public by creating a partnership of local businesses, government, libraries, schools and a Technology Resource Center equipped with computers, CD-ROM products, Internet access, Job Services' access to train for job seeking and resume/interview techniques, and other materials designed for educational purposes, and make it accessible to all students, teachers, business people and residents of the community. Ascension Library seeks to provide Internet access as part of a greater technological package, which will link three library locations, provide access to a variety of resources for all citizens, provide students and teachers access to the resources.

Lower Cameron Hospital Service District

Award: \$299,200 Grant

Location: Cameron, Louisiana

Area(s) Served) Parishes of Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Concordia, Jefferson Davis, and Lafourche Enterprise Community: Macon Ridge Champion Community:

Thibodaux

Contact Person: Cathy Denison-Wicke

Telephone Number: 318-542-5285

FAX Number: 318-542-4692

The Lower Cameron Hospital Service District has received an RUS grant on behalf of the Rural Louisiana TeleMed and TeleEd Network (RLTTN), a consortium of eleven medical and educational facilities serving Southwest Louisiana. Southwest Louisiana is a predominantly rural and medically underserved area. The participants of this network include one hub, Lake Charles Memorial Hospital, and the following ten end-user sites: South Cameron Memorial Hospital, Cameron Parish Ambulance Service (East Cameron and West Cameron), Merryville Nursing Home, Riverland Medical Center, Bayou Comprehensive Community Health Center, St. Francis Nursing Home, Calcasieu Multi-



Handicapped Center, Nicholls State University, and Cameron Parish Area Health Education Center.

RLTTN is a comprehensive system designed to allow its participants to perform the following activities: a two-way interactive video will be used for telemedicine patient diagnosis and follow up, telepsychiatry, mental health consults, nursing education, patient education, wellness and community education, health screening, continuing education for professionals, support groups, conferences, counseling, demonstrations, supervision of medical residents and healthcare students, employee training, administrative conferences, specialized medical tests, community development, emergency medical training, consortium meetings, and other activities. In addition, there will be an ambulance system that will use the slow scanning, store and forward system and medical imaging from the computer system in the network sites.

As a result of this project, the residents of Southwest Louisiana will have greater access to quality healthcare and health education, improved economic development, and savings of money and time on travel for healthcare and education. Rural residents will be able to receive earlier diagnosis and treatment. Healthcare professionals will also benefit by having expanded, enhanced educational opportunities and specialty support.

Tri-Ward General Hospital

Award: \$74,200 Grant

Location: Bernice, Louisiana

Area(s) Served: County of Union Parish

Contact Person: Carol Fernandez

Telephone Number: 504-542-4005

FAX Number: 504-345-9046

The Tri-Ward General Hospital (Tri-Ward Hospital) is a rural 11-bed non-profit, community based hospital located in the Town of Bernice in Union Parish, Louisiana. The project is primarily a telemedicine project that is initiated by teleradiology with distance learning as a secondary goal. The primary and immediate telemedicine need of Tri-Ward Hospital is for teleradiology services. Because of the inability to attract and finance a licensed radiologist, Tri-Ward Hospital has been able to only offer image reading diagnostic services in a limited manner. A RUS grant award will alleviate this problem through the purchase of appropriate telemedicine equipment and developing the teleradiology linkage with Lincoln General Hospital in Ruston, Louisiana. The overall goal of this project is to upgrade the level of medical services to the local patient population, which is primarily elderly and lower income. This will be the first use of teleradiology in Union Parish.



Northwestern State University of Louisiana

Award: \$300,000 Grant

Location: Natchitoches, Louisiana

Area(s) Served: Counties of Catahoula, DeSoto, Red River, Sabine, Winn EC/EZ

Community: Yes

Contact Person: Mr. William Hunt

Telephone Number: 318-357-5222

FAX Number: 318-357-5250

The Northwestern State University of Louisiana (Northwestern State University) is a state-supported comprehensive institution of higher education. The distance learning project will focus on five parishes (counties) -- Catahoula, DeSoto, Red River, Sabine, and Winn -- in central Louisiana. In addition to more common methods of delivering distance learning, this project will use capabilities of Internet to carry live, two-way/all-way voice and video instruction. The system will afford live visual and audio contact among all participants and the various sites. The goals for this project will be to bring improved educational opportunities to residents of all ages; to increase the number of students electing to attend or take courses from the University; to provide access to global information resources and to promote the use of these resources for the education and enrichment of the lives of rural residents; and to provide access to training and technology and to promote use of information resources for job searching.

South Central Planning and Development Commission

Award: \$74,795 Grant

Location: Thibodaux, Louisiana

Area(s) Served: Parishes of Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles, St John the Baptist, and Terrebonne

Contact Person: Richard Poche

Telephone Number: 504-446-0514

Fax Number: 504-446-0515

The South Central Planning and Development Commission , which is composed of community representatives from 13 local governments (South Central), is located in the southern section in the State of Louisiana and encompasses a largely rural area with one small city and several small municipalities. Long distances from vocational schools and other advanced learning centers have made it difficult for many to afford the opportunity of educational programs which eases the transition into the workforce. Many of the residents are faced with the barrier of distance in their efforts in obtaining learning opportunities due to low incomes, transportation costs and/or the expense of living away from home for extended periods of time.

An RUS grant award will enable South Central to provide a Distance Learning Center for Kindergarten through Grade 12 educational courses and for adult education and training via video-conferencing and live sharing computer equipment. Courses would be



sponsored through the only State college in the region, Nicholls State University, area trade and vocational schools, government agencies and private businesses. Special education programs, often unaffordable to the sparsely populated rural community, could be brought to children with special needs. In addition, the general public would be allowed access to the computers for research when not in use for scheduled training sessions. Another benefit of the Distance Learning Center will be the availability of a regionally shared facility and the promotion of economic development efforts in the South Central region in keeping up with the rapid changes in technology.

1996 Grant Awards:

Acadia-St. Landry Hospital

\$ 50,000

Church Point, Louisiana

Contact Person: Ms. Carol Fernandez

Phone Number: 504-542-4005

FAX: 504-345-9046

The overall goal of project proposed by Acadia-St.Landry Parish Hospital is to provide, through teleradiology, outreach health care services to primarily low income, economically depressed rural areas of southwest Louisiana that often have difficulty attracting health care professionals. The RUS grant award will be used to purchase the necessary equipment that will assist the area in adjusting to the rural marketplace in which they must compete. The teleradiology system proposed through this project establishes a consultative/diagnostic link to a radiology service in Lafayette, LA. The system hardware and software has been chosen to meet the full range of needs for videoconferencing, health care education, and high quality diagnostic capabilities. The Hospital's proposed teleradiology planning project helps provide ways to fill the service void left by declining state budgets for public health-care and by the inability to attract health-care professionals to much of this targeted service area. The project is a coordinated strategy to improve access to health care for the elderly, frail, isolated, poorly educated, disabled, or who otherwise have limitations to getting the care they need.

Northeast Louisiana Health Network

\$336,124

Columbia, Louisiana

Contact Person: Carol Fernandez

Phone Number: 504-542-4005

FAX: 318-327-4142

The Northeast Louisiana Health Network, Inc., is a non-profit health care consortium of ten hospitals based in northeast Louisiana that serves an area of 9 rural Louisiana parishes with an approximate population of 287,600 people. The overall goal of the Network is to provide, through telecommunications, outreach health care services to primarily low



income, economically depressed rural areas of northeast Louisiana. The RUS grant award will assist the Network's proposed telemedicine plan by providing ways to fill the service void left by declining state budgets for public health care and by the inability to attract health care professionals to much of the project's targeted area. Specifically, the proposed telecommunications system establishes a consultative/diagnostic link at a primary hospital with connectivity to rural, small hospitals which lack medical expertise. Benefits and services expected to be provided by the project are: immediate diagnosis for radiology imaging; increased accessibility of improved medical care; new medical staff specialists through referral and intra-hospital agreements; reduced travel costs and in-patient hospital stay; and accessibility to continuing education and teleconferencing programs.

1993 Grant Award:

Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Division of Nursing - Shreveport

This distance learning and telemedicine network serves the rural areas of Bunkie, Jonesboro and Winnfield. In addition to offering degree programs and continuing education opportunities, the network also includes other community enhancement activities.