

## **Massachusetts State Education Network To Expand Connectivity with Internet2's Next-Generation Network**

### *Students Across the State To Connect To Super Speedy Education Network*

Ann Arbor, MI. – September 27, 2005 – Thousands of children across the state of Massachusetts now have access to a world-class super-high speed network. Internet2 today announced that two of its university members, University of Massachusetts Amherst and Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), will together sponsor the Massachusetts Internet2 K-20 Initiative - consisting of the Massachusetts Information Turnpike Initiative (MITI), MECnet, a division of the Merrimack Education Center (MEC), and the Goddard Collaborative - for connection to Internet2's high performance advanced Abilene network. The Northern Crossroads GigaPoP (NoX) in Boston, Massachusetts will provide physical connectivity to Abilene.

Internet2's Sponsored Education Group Participation (SEGP) program enables its members to sponsor organizations outside of Internet2 in support of research and education. To date, 34 state education networks have been connected to Abilene. Until now, the Massachusetts SEGP only connected a limited number of K20 institutions. The newly expanded connection will enable thousands of K20 students across the state to experience cutting-edge educational applications and capabilities not available on today's commercial Internet.

"Internet2 has worked diligently with the state education networks across the country to bring cutting-edge Internet capabilities to the K20 community. In just over three years, since the initiative's inception, an amazing number of schools, libraries, community colleges, and museums have now connected to the Internet2 Abilene Network," said Dr. Louis Fox, executive director, Internet2 K20 Initiative and vice provost, University of Washington. "Through this program, we have begun to enable participants to leverage the latest in networking technology to collaborate, share experiences and learn from one another in real-time."

Via their connection to Abilene, students will have access to experiences like live real-time demonstrations of underwater exploration with famed explorer Dr. Bob Ballard or take master music classes from world-renowned instructors with high-bandwidth video conferencing, or dissect a biology specimen 1000 miles away with remote imaging instruments available over low-latency networking.

David Gray, vice president and CIO of the five-campus University of Massachusetts system, which operates the MITI network said, "The Internet2 SEGP provides access to a network and a community that extends collaboration to private institutions of higher learning and the K-12 community, who would not otherwise have access to these high-value educational resources."

Today, The Merrimack Education Center (MEC) connects over two thirds of the K-12 schools in Massachusetts. While not all of the schools have sufficient bandwidth to take full advantage of the network's capabilities, the number is growing rapidly.

"Throughout the state, we are working diligently to upgrade the local networks to provide our students the most advanced Internet services and capabilities. Already, MEC and the Lawrence Public Schools have completed a fiber optic network that provides a high speed communications link for traditional Internet services and for connectivity to Abilene for the city's schools," said Karen Catalozzi, MEC's associate executive director of technical

services. "We are excited by the possibilities that this network will help our students to achieve."

According to Deb Reinemann, science education consultant for Chickering School in Dover, MA, "Internet2 will bring some new educational opportunities right into the classroom. We are very excited to be able to collaborate with other Internet2 participants like the Library of Congress and the Museum of Science. I was also very pleasantly surprised to see that so many of the programs running on Internet2's network were actually developed by the students. What better way to get and keep kids interested in learning."

This expanded connection to Internet2's network was made possible by the dedication and collaborative efforts of UMass Amherst, WPI, NoX, MEC, Goddard Collaborative and MITI.

"For the last few years, a number of organizations in Massachusetts, including WPI, NoX, MITI, Merrimack Education Center, Goddard Collaborative and U Mass Amherst have been concentrating on connecting colleges and K-12s to Internet2," said Tom Lynch, vice president for information technology and CIO at WPI. "Educators and researchers at institutions like UMass and WPI have long collaborated with each other and with their peers at similarly situated institutions like Georgia Tech and UCLA, but the Internet2 SEGP program allows students and faculty at institutions like Framingham State or Quinsigamond Community College or Doherty High School to access the same resources."

#### **About the Sponsored Educational Group Participant (SEGP) Program**

The SEGP program is intended to allow expanded access to the Internet2 Abilene network for state and regional education networks, through sponsorship by Internet2 university members. State and regional networks may include nonprofit and for-profit K-20 educational institutions, museums, libraries, art galleries, or hospitals that require routine collaboration on instructional, clinical and/or research projects, services and content with Internet2 members or with other sponsored participants. The program began in early 2001 and has since connected 34 state K-12/K-20 networks.

#### **About Internet2**

Led by more than 200 U.S. universities, working with industry and government, Internet2 develops and deploys advanced network applications and technologies for research and higher education, accelerating the creation of tomorrow's Internet. Internet2 recreates the partnerships among academia, industry, and government that helped foster today's Internet in its infancy. For more information about Internet2, visit: <http://www.internet2.edu/>.

CONTACT: Lauren Kallens  
Internet2  
[lkallens@internet2.edu](mailto:lkallens@internet2.edu)  
202.331.5345

Paul Keleher  
Chairman  
Goddard Collaborative  
508-831-6632  
pkeleher@wpi.edu

###