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Office of Research News

Ohio Academic Resources Network (OARnet) part of $141.3 million in broadband stimulus grants

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The Ohio Academic Resources Network (OARnet), the technology operations arm of the University System of Ohio based at Ohio State, is a partner in three new federal stimulus grants totaling $141.3 million. Horizon Telecom, OneCommunity, Com Net Inc., and OARnet formed the Ohio Middle Mile Consortium (OMMC), a public-private partnership, to create a comprehensive statewide plan to expand broadband infrastructure to underserved areas of the state. Horizon Telecom was awarded $66.5 million to fund an extensive broadband network in 34 counties in the southern and eastern part of thes state. OneCommunity will receive $44.8 million to extend its fiber optic network in northeast Ohio. Com Net Inc. will add almost 700 new miles of broadband fiber to rural and underserved communities throughout western Ohio with a $30 million award. The collective grants, of which OARnet is expected to receive more than $7.3 million as a sub-recipient, will expand OARnet's current infrastructure and link together regional and local networks statewide. It is estimated that these three projects will create 535 direct jobs and save more than 800 jobs.

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