

## **Zayo, Com Net, and OARnet win joint \$30 million broadband grant for Ohio**

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Zayo Bandwidth, a carrier that's made a name for itself supplying dark and lit fiber products over an ever-growing network, will lend a hand in the new GigE Plus Availability Coalition (GigEPAC) by building 424 miles along the new 700 route mile fiber build. GigEPAC will leverage the \$30 million broadband stimulus grant it just won to extend broadband services to 28 rural and underserved communities in Western Ohio.

Led by Com Net, the GigEPAC Coalition includes Zayo Bandwidth, a co-direct sponsor in this award, OARnet and other last mile service providers. The coalition will provide necessary network connectivity to schools, state and local government agencies, public safety agencies, libraries and community support organizations. In addition, GigEPAC will provide middle mile network connectivity to other local service providers.

Although this is first broadband stimulus grant Zayo Bandwidth received as a co-direct sponsor, the service provider to date has won three awards this year. In addition to participating in GigEPAC, Zayo Bandwidth was awarded a \$13.4 million grant to build a fiber network in Anoka County, Minn. and a \$25 million grant to build a 626-mile fiber network connecting 21 college campuses and underserved areas in Indiana.

The joint GigEPAC/Zayo broadband stimulus award is reflective of the larger middle mile network trend that's designed not only to bring connectivity to anchor institutions, but also to smaller service providers that need alternative connections to major Internet backbones.