

*Hastings Memorial Library in Grant received one of these grants.*

The Nebraska Library Commission announced that the U.S. Department of Commerce has awarded the Library Commission a \$2,416,403 grant to fund Nebraska's public computer center project, Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities.

The three-year project is designed to expand broadband capacity; upgrade public computing resources in libraries; and advance access to employment, learning, health information, and E-Government services.

The Department of Commerce National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), provides funding to expand broadband access and adoption in communities across the U.S. and intends to increase jobs, spur investments in technology and infrastructure, and provide long-term economic benefits.

In addition to the federal grant, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will provide \$1,251,786 in matching funds, including a grant and technical assistance to support the project.

The total project budget is \$3,668,189.

This grant project will increase connectivity in 45 of Nebraska's public library buildings, as well as deploy more than 600 new computer workstations and upgrade another 475 at 147 public library locations.

With this increased capacity to deliver rich Internet content and provide computer literacy

training at libraries across the state, the project will partner with other state agencies and organizations to provide services in education, workforce development, and E-Government to 13,300 weekly users at libraries.

As many as 42,700 Nebraskans will benefit from approximately 384,500 hours of education over the three years of the project.