

June 6, 2005

**To:** NITC Commissioners  
**From:** Anne Byers  
**Subject:** Community Council Report

**New Member Nomination: Dr. Jerry Easterday**

The Telehealth Subcommittee and the Community Council have nominated Dr. Jerry Easterday to represent telehealth on the Community Council. His bio is included in the meeting materials. I will be asking you to approve his nomination.

**Technology Innovation Grants for Economic Revitalization**

The Nebraska Information Technology Commission's Community Technology Fund is one of many projects which receives funding from the Technology Infrastructure Fund which is funded by 2 cents of the cigarette tax. Due to a decline in cigarette tax revenue, competitive grants have not been offered for several years. In the past two years, the Commission has funded the IT Planning and Mini Grant program as a special project.

At their May 24 meeting, the Community Council recommended offering mini grants for projects which use information technology to enhance economic development instead of funding a special project. Approximately \$20,000 is available in the Community Technology Fund.

Guidelines for the proposed Technology Innovation Grants for Economic Revitalization (TIGER) are included in the meeting materials. The proposed program would award mini grants for \$1,000 to \$5,000 for projects which use information technology to enhance economic development. Applications would be due Sept. 1, 2005. Awards would be announced in November 2005. In order to offer competitive mini grants this year, the NITC will need to approve the guidelines.

***TANgents***

The latest issue of Technologies Across Nebraska's newsletter, *TANgents*, came out on June 3 and is available at [http://extension.unl.edu/tangents/tangents\\_contents6-05.htm](http://extension.unl.edu/tangents/tangents_contents6-05.htm).

The NITC has long been a supporter of telehealth. This issue of *TANgents* features a powerful telehealth success story. Lutheran Family Services and the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing have partnered to offer mental health services to the deaf and hard of hearing, non-English speakers, and to other underserved populations. Linked for Service has served 655 people in 114 sessions in just six months.

The NITC and CAP have played a small role in the development of Linked for Service. The Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing utilized funds from a Community Technology Fund grant as partial funding for the system. Representatives of Lutheran Family Services and the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing first met at a meeting of the Telehealth Subcommittee. Max Thacker from UNMC also provided assistance. Linked for Service is now connected to the telehealth backbone.