

NEWS RELEASE



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Yarmuth and Abramson Announce Louisville Library Will Receive \$1.2 Million in Funding to Increase Computer Access

Technology Project Funded by Recovery Act Grant and Library Foundation Match

(Louisville, Ky) – The Louisville Free Public Library will soon offer expanded access to technology and the Internet as the result of \$1.2 million in grants, part of which come from the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) as announced today by Congressman John Yarmuth (KY-3) and Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson.

“This Recovery Act investment will help Louisvillians who are unemployed, underemployed, or looking to change careers by connecting them with vital job-hunting resources at their neighborhood library,” said Congressman Yarmuth. “It’s critical that we leave no one behind during our economic recovery, and this funding will help ensure these valuable services are publicly available to help more people than ever before.”

The funding will be used to expand the number of public computers in local libraries, to provide true high-speed broadband Internet access to all 18 library locations, and to offer new and expanded job training and educational resources to the residents of Metro Louisville.

“This is yet another exciting opportunity for our library to reach out into the community and serve all of our residents in a significant way,” said Mayor Jerry Abramson. “These services can make a difference in people having access to continuing education, government assistance and a fruitful job search.”

The BTOP grant from the federal Department of Commerce and National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) will allow for computer center expansion at locations with the greatest need for additional resources. It also creates four new specialized service centers at three other library locations in the community, including a new Job Shop dedicated to job skills technology and employment services, two new innovative centers for library services to teens, and one family computing center.

“More than 3700 patrons use one of the library’s 524 public computers on a given day,” said Library Director Craig Buthod. “This grant will increase the number of public computers by 24%, allowing access for nearly 6,000 additional users per week. More computers, coupled with increased Internet connection speed, helps facilitate learning opportunities throughout the library for virtually every patron. And the new Job Shop expansion at the Main Library, addition of two Teen Centers, a second Job Shop in southwestern Jefferson County, and a

Family Computing Center will expand training and educational services to those people who need it most.”

The total cost of the project is \$1,230,806. A portion of those funds will be matched by the Library Foundation as part of the federally required matching funds for the BTOP grant.

“The Library Foundation is pleased to be able to play a part in the library’s receiving the BTOP grant,” said Library Foundation Chairman Paul Thompson. “By stepping up to provide matching funds for the project, the Foundation is advancing its mission of enhancing the programs and services of the Louisville Free Public Library. Supporting the library’s efforts to provide technology to its patrons has long been a priority of the Library Foundation, and we congratulate the library on being awarded this important grant.”

LFPL has been offering computer access to library patrons since 1997. In 1999, Computer Learning Centers at 4 locations were opened to provide classroom space for teaching courses in basic computer literacy. In the decade since, the number of public computers has increased dramatically, from fewer than 100 to 524. The technology initiatives of the library have been made possible through support from the Library Foundation, which provided funding to build the network and since then, to develop important new services.

Louisville Free Public Library connects the residents of Louisville and Jefferson County to knowledge and information at our 18 locations and on the Web at www.lfpl.org. Come on in, the whole world’s inside.

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