

Oct. 6, 2011

Kansas City Kansas Librarians Launch “K-20 Librarian” Campaign To Facilitate Access to Educational, Cultural and Civic Institutions

Kansas City, KS -- Oct. 6, 2011, -- Kansas City librarians announced today the launch of a new national libraries initiative, the “K-20 Librarian”. The first local consortium, initiated by the KCK Public Library, begins as a new collaboration of school, public and academic librarians seeking to lower technological and administrative barriers to deeper integration of services from area educational, cultural and civic institutions.

The KCK consortium’s goal is to build institutional bridges across the so-called K-20 spectrum of K-12 schools, public libraries, colleges, universities and others that will enhance and extend distance learning opportunities and resource sharing. The project seeks to leverage emerging technologies like high performance internet access anticipated from Google’s Fiber project due to begin deployment in early 2012.

The KCK “K-20 Librarian” collaboration is part of a national “K-20 Librarian” advocacy campaign initiated through a partnership of the Digital Village “Fiber to the Library” initiative and Internet2’s K20 program.

Historically, the nation’s educational institutions; K-12 school systems, public libraries as well as colleges and universities, have had only minimal success in creating sustained partnerships and sharing resources across K-20 organizations. Obstacles to developing cooperative programs and day-to-day interaction arise from serving varied populations with different needs, plus having widely dissimilar governance structures, funding sources, internal cultures and traditions.

K-20 Librarians can become the connective tissue of a new national education continuum where all institutions of learning can function more as a integrated whole to serve the needs of each learner at any level of accomplishment across any distance by providing tailored resources and expanded educational opportunities.

Further, the KCK collaboration aims to serve as a distributed test lab, exploring applications that utilize very fast internet connectivity, new immersive interactive technologies and multi-user digital environments in support of educational, cultural and civic purposes.

Collaboration initiators include: KCK Public Library, KCK School District, KCK Community College, University of Kansas Libraries, Kan-ed, and KanREN, the Kansas state research and education network, and Digital Village of Sausalito, CA. The group encourages wider adoption of the “K-20Librarian” concept and invites participation by librarians of all types across Kansas, the greater KC metro area and beyond.

Support for the KCK “K-20 Librarian” Initiative:

“I am pleased that the KCK Public Library is playing such a key role in the ‘K-20 Librarian’ collaborative and propelling it so that libraries at every level will be more accessible and provide more larger offerings to our citizens through the use of ultra-high speed broadband. Our community’s partnership with Google Fiber is helping spur new opportunities and initiatives like the KCK “K-20 Librarian” consortium. This leveraging of more robust broadband connectivity with enhanced learning and cooperation is part of what I believe is the formula for success in communities in the future. I applaud all of the partners that are making this a reality.”

Joe Reardon, Mayor
Kansas City, KS

“Our motto at KCKCC is ‘Making Life Better’ and that is exactly what the ‘K-20 Librarian’ Initiative and the Google Fiber Project can help us achieve. These two projects will allow us to increase our usage of streaming media in our classrooms and off-campus and help us better prepare our students for success as they leave KCKCC whether it is to a four-year college or the workforce. The better prepared the student is, the higher their success rate in whatever their goals may be.”

Cheryl Postlewait
Director of the Library
Kansas City Kansas Community College

“The ‘K-20 Librarian’ Initiative together with the Google Fiber project will provide students in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools with tremendous opportunities to harness the full power of the internet in order to expand and deepen their learning. From technologies such as video-conferencing, on-line and distance learning, to ideas and technologies yet to be invented, Google Fiber will help district students connect to the broader world and develop the skills that will allow them to graduate college career ready.”

Dr. Cynthia Lane
Superintendent of Schools USD# 500

“Libraries have helped enable life long learning since the first public library opened its doors. The difference today is that technology and broadband connectivity allow for greater collaboration and more in-depth learning. Schools in rural Kansas can offer their students specialized subjects because broadband allows them to tap teacher resources in more urban settings. College students access research material seamlessly to enhance their studies. Through broadband, **all** our residents have an opportunity to learn new skills and hone current skills so that they are better able to compete in the global market.”

Joanne M. Budler
State Librarian
State Library of Kansas

“The ‘K-20 Librarian’ collaboration supports our mission to connect a dynamic community with tools, resources and open spaces to enrich lives in Wyandotte County. It will allow wider exploration of the world through closer integration of our local school, public and academic libraries. The Google Fiber project gives us an opportunity to experiment with new technologies and new collaborations among all our learning institutions. Continuing education for our librarians will benefit from locations around the globe.”

Carol Levers
Director of Libraries
Kansas City, Kansas

“Librarians play a vital role in education, whether at universities, community colleges, public libraries or schools, and are the key to this initiative. The “K-20 Librarian” collaboration expands the reach of our collective resources and our expertise to significantly impact the learning experience in new and innovative ways. I’m excited about the project and the role KU Libraries can play in this effort.”

Dr. Lorraine Haricombe
Dean of KU Libraries
Kansas University

“One of most exciting benefits of the KCK ‘K-20 Librarian’ Initiative plus the Google Fiber Project is learning how gigabit connections can be used to support the missions of our public sector institutions. Leadership is needed now more than ever and the parties joining together to convene this initiative in Kansas City, Kansas will bring about awesome results. Clearly, more advanced applications can go farther to support successful institutional collaboration and help address the grand challenges communities face today. Kansas City will also benefit from practical innovations that can strengthen and transform the missions of public sector institutions while vastly expanding an emerging marketplace for the private sector.”

Randy Stout
R&D Director, Kan-ed
Kansas Board of Regents

“The ‘K-20 Librarian’ initiative is a great example of libraries and communities leveraging technology resources to improve the life of the community. It will play a vital role in making the community viable economically and will be key to creating a learning environment for all residents. Libraries have been connecting people to information, experiences, ideas and now technology that will enable the public to create innovation and new ways of harnessing the dynamic nature of our times.”

Donna Lauffer
County Librarian
Johnson County Library

With the Kansas City Kansas Public Library and its Director Carol Levers in the lead the libraries and schools of the Kansas City Metro area are taking a big leap into the future of technology and on-line access and virtual learning.

Crosby Kemper III
Chief Executive Officer
The Kansas City Public Library

”Mid-Continent Public Library is very excited about the ‘K-20 Librarian’ initiative. Information literacy is as important to the twenty-first century student. Indeed, as important as traditional literacy was in the twentieth century. Libraries are a very important partner in teaching and in maintaining these new skills. Without a complete understanding of these skills, people will not be competitive. The ‘K-20 Librarian’ helps to position our next generations in a way to be the leaders in every industry.”

Steven V. Potter, Director
Mid-Continent Public Library

“Today there are approximately 66,000 school, public, and academic libraries around the country connected together by the national fabric of research and education networks with thousands more connecting as a result of the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) grant program. These connections are helping unleash libraries from the constraints of bandwidth and enabling unprecedented opportunities for collaboration, resource sharing, and partnership. The Internet2 K20 Initiative looks forward to helping promote and stimulate these collaborations as part of the ‘K-20 Librarian’ effort.”

James Werle, MLIS
Director, Internet2 K20 Initiative

“Who better than librarians, with their deep professional kinship and common traditions to act as an institutional bridges and cultural integrators among our schools, museums, public libraries, colleges, universities and other learning organizations. Where better than a local library, as community media lab, for people to come and explore new information and communication technologies.”

Don Means
Principal, Digital Village
“Fiber to the Library” Campaign

Contacts:

Carol Levers, KCKPL

913-279-2302

clevers@kckpl.org

Don Means, Digital Village

415-350-3316

don@digitalvillage.com