

Navajo Nation Bridges the Digital Divide

Interactive Video Conferencing and Distance Learning a Reality for Navajo Students

Charlotte, NC- February 27, 2009— Conterra Telecom Services (Conterra), a national broadband services company specializing in rural areas, has announced the commencement of high-speed wireless wide area network service for the Northeast Arizona Technological Institute of Vocational Education (N.A.T.I.V.E.). The 100 Mbps Ethernet based microwave radio network connects all of the eight member district high schools through 66 of their Career Technical classrooms. A five year contract was awarded to Conterra through the federal E-Rate program which subsidizes a large portion of the District's costs for the new services.

N.A.T.I.V.E. is a Joint Technological Education District in Arizona working in partnership with eight area high schools: Chinle, Ganado, Pinon, Monument Valley, Red Mesa, Tuba City, Valley, and Window Rock, all located on the Navajo Nation. Its mission is to provide Career Technical Education for all its students. The N.A.T.I.V.E. district spans 22,000 square miles throughout three counties, servicing an average of 4,000 students annually. The average distance between N.A.T.I.V.E. high schools is 101 miles and 78% of student traveled roads to school are unpaved. High quality, high-speed broadband services were virtually non-existent on most parts of the Navajo Nation, but this has now changed.

In the fall of 2008, Conterra teamed with BNI Solutions, a subsidiary of Numerex Corporation, to deploy a high-speed, fiber optic quality wireless broadband network, which provides Internet access and on-demand interactive video conferencing services (H.323 technology) to students, administrators and faculty. Conterra monitors, manages and supports the network on a 24X7X365 basis and guarantees network performance and reliability. These sites now share curriculum, receive college-level courses for students, receive professional career development support, plan team-taught multi-site lessons, and share individual expertise. The Interactive Video Conferencing Distance Learning Network lets students at any location take classes from all over the world. This network is the first of its kind on the Navajo Nation.

“The extreme distances between sites and the isolated rural environment of the Navajo Nation make video conferencing distance learning the only option for providing curriculum equity to our students. Through the vision of the N.A.T.I.V.E. Governing Board, implementation of interactive distance learning across a high speed microwave network reduces the negative impact of isolation, and opens the door to a wide variety of career training opportunities”, said Karen Lesher, Superintendent of the N.A.T.I.V.E. District. “Even though N.A.T.I.V.E. District entered into unchartered areas by building the 100 Mbps WAN across the Navajo Nation, the Conterra Telecom team made the challenge easy. The Conterra solution was flawless and the end WAN product is 100% reliable. Their expertise, perseverance, and experience made what could have remained ‘our vision’ into ‘our reality’. Our students are benefiting today by having otherwise inaccessible college level career programs now available at their sites.”

“ We are extremely gratified to be able to utilize our many years of technology and telecommunications experience to deliver services to students and teachers in parts of the Navajo Nation that might otherwise be unable to access the growing number of ‘distance learning’ opportunities available through the Internet, noted Conterra’s President, Dennis Francis. “This is a great example of the federal E-rate funding program achieving its intended result of bridging America’s digital divide by making sure locations and economics do not stand in the way of equal education opportunities for all American school children,” added Mr. Francis.

The N.A.T.I.V.E. Wide Area Network (WAN) contract is one of four major E-Rate telecommunications projects recently awarded to Conterra. Three similar contracts for Conterra’s high-speed broadband networks have been awarded in rural Texas through the federal E-Rate program. Texas Region 14 ESC became operational last summer and new broadband networks for Region 10 and 15 have been started. When these broadband networks are completed, Conterra will bring high-quality, high-speed Ethernet based broadband and Internet services to 125 Texas school districts at performance levels comparable to those enjoyed by schools in the state’s largest metropolitan areas.

About Conterra Telecom Services

Conterra Telecom Services, headquartered in Charlotte, NC, is a national provider of facilities-based broadband services for schools, wireless carriers and select enterprises that require bandwidth intensive, carrier-grade data, video and voice transport services primarily in outer suburban and rural markets. Conterra and its subsidiaries currently provide these services to over 1,000 K-12 schools and colleges throughout the United States, affording broadband services to hundreds of thousands of students, teachers and administrators.

Privately owned, Conterra was established by the founders and members of management of Vanguard Cellular Systems, Inc., which became one of the first and largest independent cellular companies in the United States. Started in 1982, Vanguard designed, built and operated its own point-to-point microwave transport systems to support wireless voice and data traffic within its mostly rural cellular networks throughout the country which are now part of AT&T Mobility. For more information about Conterra, visit www.conterra.com or call: **800-634-1374**.

About BNI Solutions

BNI Solutions is a subsidiary of Numerex Corp, headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. Numerex provides a broad choice of secure machine-to-machine (M2M) network services and solutions. Numerex delivers a depth of expertise and excellence through its service platforms that leading companies choose to power their solutions. Numerex is the first M2M Company in North America to carry ISO 27001 certification -- ISO's highest information security benchmark that ensures data confidentiality, integrity and availability. The Company offers its products and services through a variety of brands and OEM partners, including Uplink, Orbit One, Ublip and BNI Solutions. BNI has an extensive history providing complete broadband system solutions to a wide range of users in the education, government, medical and business communities. For more information on Numerex and BNI Solutions, visit our Web site at: www.numerex.com

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