



UNHCE – Selected Distance Education Initiatives in Partnership with New Hampshire Public Television (NHPTV)

"Distance Education" is a broad term which includes computer mediated instruction, video instruction through satellite, cable, and two-way interactive television, and multimedia-based instruction using the World Wide Web (WWW) as a delivery and communication tool. Distance education can make it possible for learners who are widely spread apart geographically to have access to many of the resources of a central institution and/or to a "virtual" on-line university in which the institution itself is comprised of several institutions linked together electronically.

Distance education allows the participation of learners who cannot access traditional programs due to commitments such as work or family. It allows students to access distributed resources such as those available on the WWW and increases the educational options available to those who are mobility-impaired or handicapped in some other way.

Satellite Uplink/Downlinks

UNHCE secured grant funding in 1994 to install a satellite uplink system on campus in conjunction with New Hampshire Public Television (NHPTV) who maintains and operates the system. In addition, in 1995 satellite downlink systems were installed in Coos, Strafford and Merrimack counties. As a member of the American Distance Education Consortium (ADEC), staff downlink and tape educational programs on a regular basis. Two digital satellite grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF) have established digital satellite uplink and downlink systems for high speed Internet access in the remote areas of Coos County (2001) and the Isles of Shoals (2002).



“Reforging the Links: The University Digital Business Partnership Project”

In July, 2000, representatives of UNHCE and NHPTV attended the “Reforging the Links: The University Digital Business Partnership Project”, in Madison, Wisconsin. As a result, the two departments agreed to collaborate on initiatives which maximize resources, enhance distance education and improve delivery of research-based education and information to the citizens of New Hampshire. The partnership determined areas and audiences where joint program development and delivery was appropriate including the following areas: 1) conducted a UNHCE pilot project



involving food safety for schools in an effort to determine the benefits of establishing Extension sites on the Granite State Distance Learning Network (GSDLN), and 2) sought ways to maximize UNHCE's membership in the American Distance Education Consortium (ADEC).

Granite State Distance Learning Network (GSDLN)

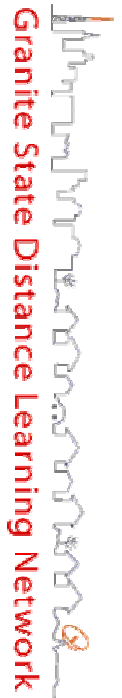
UNHCE, in conjunction with Bell Atlantic, NHPTV, North Country Education Foundation, and Bow and Somersworth High Schools, conducted a pilot program in 1999, designed to provide educational programs to teachers and students via a two-way interactive video network using Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) technology. Sites were equipped with room-based videoconferencing hardware and connected to each other via a video bridge. The bridge allowed multiple locations to participate simultaneously in a videoconference and shared classroom resources. The trial's purpose was to test ATM with the video codex, software, and associated hardware to prove the interoperability of this network solution to meet the standards deemed acceptable for educational distance learning. It successfully demonstrated solutions via distance learning applications across the state. This was in response to the need for affordable, financially predictable hardware and network solutions to:

1. Connecting remote classrooms to advance learning.
2. Simultaneously broadcasting professional development originating from UNHCE, NHPTV and other sites to all sites.
3. Providing community/public organizations with access to conduct business meetings.
4. Enabling high-speed connectivity to the Internet.

In the fall of 1999, GSDLN entered a second phase featuring the original partners, i.e., UNHCE, NHPTV, North Country Education Foundation, Bow and Somersworth High Schools with the addition of Rochester, Dover, Portsmouth and Merrimack Valley school systems.

In the fall of 2000, UNHCE received a USDA grant, in conjunction with the Dartmouth Medical School and the NH State Library, that has enabled UNHCE to install six two-way interactive video systems on the Granite State Distance Learning Network.

Today, GSDLN is a public/private partnership of over 30 organizations dedicated to developing and implementing an affordable, high-speed telecommunications capacity that ultimately will make interactive video networking and high-speed Internet access available in every New Hampshire community. The primary goal is to deliver distance learning, professional development, community-based video



conferencing and high-speed access to the Internet across the state. When fully implemented, everyone in New Hampshire will have access to a broad range of educational opportunities without the need to travel more than 30 minutes from where they live or work. Literally translated, this means that UNH, K-12 schools, post-secondary institutions, libraries, other local/regional public entities, hospitals and businesses will have access to affordable, advanced telecommunications resources.

ADEC

UNHCE is a member of the American Distance Education Consortium (ADEC), an international consortium of state universities and land grant institutions providing high quality and economic distance education programs and services via the latest and most appropriate information technologies. UNH CE pays \$6,250 per year to be designated as a member institution.

ADEC broadcasts over 1,000 hours of programs to member institutions free each year. We have been recording a couple of teleconferences a week at our Strafford, Merrimack and Coos County sites. These teleconferences have been of benefit to UNHCE and a plethora of staff working in state, county, municipal and non-profit organizations/departments throughout New Hampshire. ADEC provides resources for all types of Distance Education activities including teaching over the WWW. ADEC has been successful in obtaining PTFP (Public Telecommunications Facilities Program) grants for digitizing satellite networks. ADEC is currently negotiating contracts with commercial DBS (digital broadcast satellite) providers to establish a digital ADEC channel. ADEC awards grants for National broadcasts. One example is the grant UNHCE and UVM received in 1996 to broadcast a "Great Beginnings: Nutrition for Pregnant Teens" program to 250 locations throughout the US. ADEC also provides leadership for discussion of issues and policy development in areas related to new technology deployment, i.e. intellectual property rights, universal access, etc., and establishes the foundation for collaborative degree offerings between member institutions.



Partnership for a Safe New Hampshire

In 2003, NHPTV was one of four public television stations to be awarded a 4x4 Community Partnership Grant from The National Center for Outreach, a public television organization designed to encourage participation and effect change at the community level. The grant joined UNHCE and NHPTV together with two other organizations, New Hampshire Library Association, and Volunteer NH, to conduct outreach events. Each partner brought unique resources, and shared public service missions. The partners developed the **Partnership for a Safe New Hampshire**, a project centered around the topic of emergency preparedness that raised awareness and fostered participation on a community level.

**PARTNERSHIP
for a Safe NH**

Working with personnel from the New Hampshire Department of Safety's Bureau of Emergency Management (BEM), the **Partnership for a Safe New Hampshire** addressed a critical need by conducting informational sessions and facilitating discussions at eight community venues throughout the state in October and November 2003. Speakers for these sessions included representatives of the Bureau of Emergency Management, UNH Cooperative Extension and/or Volunteer NH! (Citizen Corp). In addition, local emergency management and town officials were encouraged to attend. The sessions focused on community-specific issues regarding the need for emergency preparedness plans at the local level.



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