

Quarter/Dates of Activity: September 2007 through October 2007  
**Seed Grant:** San Joaquin Valley eHealth Network Project  
**Grantee Organization:** School of Natural Sciences, University of California, Merced  
**Contact Person:** Maria Pallavicini, Ph.D.  
**Phone:** 209-228-2969  
**Email:** mpallavicini@ucmerced.edu

### **Description of Quarter's Activity/impact on Partnership Goals & Objectives**

The contract for the seed grant with University of California, Merced, was finalized on Sept 10. Thus, per university policy, the grant began at the date the contract was executed. Due to the delay in finalizing the contract, I project that the grant is approximately one quarter behind schedule at this point but that we will be able to move forward rapidly.

The goals planned for the first quarter were to recruit an Assessment and Implementation Team, recruit an analyst, coordinate two regional meetings, and begin site assessment. Progress has been made toward achieving some of the stated goals, particularly those that did not require significant funds upfront.

Activities included staff recruitment, media events and planning meetings.

The Telemedicine Team will be made up of the PI (Maria Pallavicini), Telemedicine Project Manager, Analyst, IT support and academic representation from UC Merced, UCSF at Fresno and UC Davis, AT&T, and Michael Byrne, from the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, and three community members. The following staff recruitment is in progress or completed:

- Telemedicine Project Manager- in progress
- Analyst- in progress
- IT support for eHealth Centers- completed

We anticipate having personnel on board by December 1.

Since award of the Seed Grant, two other sources of funding to support the overall initiative were obtained. Generous awards from the California Emerging Technologies Foundation (CETF) and the AT&T Foundation were obtained to leverage funding initiated and provided by the Seed Grant. These awards expanded the scope of the eHealth Initiative to create a Valleywide vision for a telemedicine network, focusing on rural underserved. The Valleywide planning effort will involve site assessment of more than 90 sites receiving the federal rural designation, development of a connectivity plan, and an implementation plan. Establishment of four eHealth Centers, supported by the Seed Grant and supplemented with funds from the AT&T Foundation, will be located at sites that are part of the larger plan for the Valley.

At about the same time that UC Merced received awards for our telemedicine initiative, UC distributed funds derived from Prop 1D bond money to each of the five medical schools to support infrastructure for telemedicine for education. UCSF at Fresno received \$2 million through the UC campus. UC Merced, UC Davis and UCSF at Fresno have agreed to partner in the planning and development of the telemedicine Initiative to leverage funds from multiple sources, to ensure that institutions are not competing with each other, and to develop strategies to distribute efforts throughout the region.

A number of meetings were held in support of the above activities:

1. Media event announcing the Telemedicine Initiative for the Valley with broad coverage from Bakersfield to Stockton and representation from CETF, Governor's Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, and AT&T Foundation.
2. UC Merced-UC Davis Telemedicine Center to discuss UCD role/subcontract in eHealth centers and larger vision for the SJV eHealth Network.
3. UC Academic Partners- UC Merced, UCD, UCSF at Fresno to establish understanding of UC campus partnerships/roles in the Valley for telemedicine initiative leveraging resources from the three campuses.
4. UC Office of the President- Cathryn Nation and Tom Nesbitt- Integration of San Joaquin Valley Telemedicine Planning with UC System-wide plans for telemedicine for California

### **Planned Activities for next 3-6 months:**

1. Complete staff recruitment, finalize, Telemedicine Assessment Team.
2. Attend Telemedicine Technology Summit at UCD, including vendor presentations, to benefit from UC system-wide vendor contracts for telemedicine equipment.
3. Begin site assessments, coordinating assessments of nine potential sites with the 90+ to be evaluated for CETF.
4. Coordinate regional meeting in the Southern Valley- Bakersfield- Kings County.

### **Challenges/Problems/Bottlenecks/Feedback**

#### **Major challenges ensued in two areas:**

1. Delays in executing the contract with BTH due to policies about equipment ownership and overhead on the Seed Grant. According to BTH policies, the telemedicine equipment ownership resides with BTH, whereas UC Merced wanted equipment ownership to reside with the clinics. Both equipment ownership and overhead issues were resolved in early September, allowing the contract for the Seed Grant to be finalized between BTH and UC Merced.
2. Identifying qualified individuals to manage the Telemedicine Initiative. The pool of qualified individuals to manager this initiative is very small, and it is unexpectedly challenging to recruit a qualified individual. Consequently, the project has started without a project manager. I anticipate that we will be able to complete the recruitment into this position no later than the end of the year, in 2007.

#### **If you have you coordinated any outreach, please describe briefly**

The media event on campus announcing the Telemedicine Initiative was a major outreach event to the community, explaining the concept of telemedicine, acknowledging the generous sponsors of the initiative and describing the plans for the next 12-18 months. The outcome of the media event was a flood of e-mail from health care providers and elected officials in the Valley requesting to be part of the Initiative.

The media event led to national recognition of the Valley's efforts. An interview with a Washington-based organization: [www.NextGenWeb.org](http://www.NextGenWeb.org) was recently completed and will be broadcast as podcasts from their site and others.