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### **Louisiana Board of Regents Receives National Science Foundation Award to Connect Xavier University with LONI**

BATON ROUGE --- The Louisiana Board of Regents received more than \$1 million in a two-year National Science Foundation award to connect an additional university to the Louisiana Optical Network Initiative, or LONI, extending high-speed networking capabilities in state.

Through this funding, LONI, which is administered through the Louisiana Board of Regents, will provide connection points to the high-bandwidth network for Xavier University, a historically black university in New Orleans. LONI already connects six research universities in the state, the two LSU Health Sciences Centers in New Orleans and Shreveport, and four public universities in Mississippi.

“LONI already provides a strong foundation for the research institutions in our state, and we are pleased to enhance the network by adding a new university,” said Donald Vandal, LONI Executive Director. “Through this connection, Xavier will have unprecedented access to a high-speed optical network, allowing faculty, staff and students there to conduct research faster and more efficiently than relying on traditional network capabilities, which will ultimately make the university more competitive for grants and collaborative projects.”

This project is part of a \$20 million program, funded through the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the stimulus package), which the National Science Foundation is administering through its Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, or EPSCoR. The foundation’s EPSCoR program helps states that traditionally have lacked strong cyberinfrastructure for research by providing federal funding to expand use of high-performance computing, high-speed networking, advanced software, data management tools, and other scientific computing technology.

Louisiana Board of Regents is one of 17 state higher education entities to receive funding through this program. The complete list of recipients is available on the National Science Foundation’s Web site at

[http://www.nsf.gov/news/news\\_summ.jsp?cntn\\_id=117391&org=NSF&from=news](http://www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=117391&org=NSF&from=news).

#### **About LONI**

The [Louisiana Optical Network Initiative](#), or LONI, administered under the authority of Louisiana Board of Regents, is a high-speed, fiber optic network that connects supercomputing resources among the state's

major research universities – LSU, Southern University, University of Louisiana-Lafayette, Louisiana Tech University, University of New Orleans and Tulane University – along with the two LSU Health Sciences Centers in New Orleans and Shreveport and four universities in Mississippi. LONI connects Louisiana to major national research networks, including Internet2, and is one of 11 resource providers on TeraGrid, the backbone of national cyberinfrastructure.

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