



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Harford County Public Library Receives Nearly \$24,000 Grant to Expand Wi-Fi Beyond Library Buildings

Belcamp, Md., May 7, 2020 -- The Maryland Board of Public Works approved a \$23,863.17 Emergency Broadband Education Assistance Grant on May 6 to expand Wi-Fi beyond Harford County Public Library's 11 locations.

The grant came from the Governor's Office of Rural Broadband, which provides financial assistance through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

"We are so grateful to Governor Hogan and his team for supporting this grant," said Mary Hastler, CEO of Harford County Public Library. "During the quarantine for the pandemic, we have learned how important it is to have access to the Internet for children to continue their studies, for adults who are working remotely and for entertainment purposes for the entire family. This grant will help the library expand its reach to the community."

Wi-Fi will be expanded by approximately 300 feet (nearly the length of a football field) at each of the libraries in Harford County. Harford County Public Library has been offering Wi-Fi to its customers for the past decade.

The library estimates that the extended Wi-Fi will be available to the community in early June.

Many individuals and families without Internet access at home have been accessing the Internet by sitting in the parking lots of library branches throughout the county. The additional Wi-Fi reach at each library will especially assist students and families in areas of Harford County which do not have access to high-speed Internet service.

For more than 74 years, Harford County Public Library has provided its communities with access to ideas that inform, entertain and inspire. Last year the library interacted with its residents more than 6.3 million times – borrowing free materials, visiting branches and the website, attending classes and events. In 2019, Harford County Public Library received the Maryland Library Association's first Excellence in Marketing Award. For more information, visit HCPLonline.org.

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