Beaufort County Community College Library Establishes Down East Area Network

To fulfill the changing needs of the population in its service area, Beaufort County Community College Library has implemented DEAN — Down East Area Network. Using telecommunications, DEAN provides rapid access to the BCCC Library from two Beaufort County public high schools and the BHM Regional Library in Washington, N.C. Basic components of this wide area network (WAN) are: a Prime 4050 computer, v.32 9600 baud modems, telephone lease lines, DYNIX software and a Panafax telefacsimile machine. High school libraries selected to participate in the first phase of the DEAN project are Aurora High School and Northside High School.

DEAN makes it possible for students at Aurora High School or Northside High School, or a patron of the BHM Regional Library system, to have complete access to the BCCC Library and its resources. A patron sits at a computer terminal, searches for references, prints the bibliography shown on the computer scree, and faxes the printed information to the BCCC Library. When BCCC Library personnel receive the request for materials, they find the requested items, fax articles back to the students within a few hours, or mail books using the local public school courier service and the U.S. mail. If the BCCC Library does not have the requested item in its own holdings, the staff will search for the item using the NCIN-OCLC interlibrary loan network. With DEAN, students and regional library patrons will have much greater and more convenient access to informational resources than ever before.

The DEAN networking system was funded as an annually designated project by the BCCC Foundation. As the focal point of resources for the surrounding rural areas, the library is dedicated to sharing its diversified materials. In July 1990, the library became fully automated using DYNIX software. NEWSBANK and INFOTRAC are CD-Rom indexes frequently used by library patrons and the library is also a depository for North Carolina Government Documents. Online data searching is done via DIALOG and via LINC (LOG INTO NC) for statistical data about North Carolina.

Betty Ferrell, director of library services, believes that this system will be invaluable to remote areas. It serves as a gateway for information retrieval. "The DEAN project is unique to this community and North Carolina because it connects public schools, public libraries and our community college library in the sharing of resources and information through a telecommunica-

tions system. All libraries need to nurture cooperative relationships because of the economy and the growing need for information," states Mrs. Ferrell.

The project has been in place about three months and has had a fill rate of approximately 85 percent of 670 total requests including books, audiovisuals and periodicals. The BCCC Library staff knew that the project was successful when it fulled 189 out of 230 requests from one of the high schools.

During the second phase of the DEAN project, BCCC Library plans to extend access points to other school and public libraries in its four county service area. The expansion of this project is contingent upon computer space and continued funding. By establishing this electronic connection, BCCC Library can supply information resources that are otherwise inaccessible to citizens in isolated areas.

For more information, contact: Penny G. Sermons, Librarian, Beaufort County Community College, P.O. Box 1069, Washington, NC 27889 (919) 946-6194.