Florida LambdaRail, University of South Florida, and Internet2 Enable Expansion of Florida K20 Community¹s Access to the Internet2 Network

Collaboration opens access to every K20 institution in Florida to the Internet2 Network

February 4, 2009 Florida LambdaRail (FLR), the University of South Florida, and Internet2 today announced they are collaborating to provide access to nearly every K20 institution in the state of Florida to the nationwide Internet2 high performance network. In doing so, thousands more teachers and students across the state will be able to take advantage of the most cutting-edge Internet resources in support of research and education.

In 2006, FLR became an Internet2 Sponsored Education Group Participant (SEGP) to provide K20 schools connected to its network access to Internet2. Today¹s announcement marks a major expansion of this effort through cooperation with the University of South Florida and the Florida Department of Education (DOE) through its Florida Information Resource Network 2 (FIRN2), which together with FLR, provide statewide connectivity to most K20 institutions in the state.

²USF is very pleased that its current participation with FIRN2 in providing Internet2 will be expanded and enhanced through this partnership with FLR. The collaboration will not only provide enhancements to the infrastructure but will save costs overall, which is extremely important in this time of economic difficulty,² said Michael Pearce, USF vice president for information technology and chief technology officer.

The Florida SEGP network will connect to the Internet2 Network through the University of South Florida connection as well as through FLR via Southern Crossroads (SoX). Members of FLR include Florida State University, University of Central Florida, Florida Atlantic University, University of Florida, Florida International University, University of Miami and now the University of South Florida. By connecting Florida¹s K-12 schools, libraries, community colleges, performing arts centers and museums, the newly expanded SEGP allows these institutions the ability to interact directly with thousands of K20 institutions connected to the Internet2 Network in 36 other states, offering a wide array of advanced online education resources and nationwide collaboration opportunities.

³In bringing together innovators from all regions of the country, the SEGP program seeks to encourage the development and use of advanced educational technologies at all levels of research and academia,² said Louis Fox, director of Internet2¹s K20 initiative. ³The unique and diverse K20 community brought together by the Florida SEGP will bring a new and exciting perspective as well as additional resources to this expanding program and will help support even greater contributions by this important segment of our community.²

The Florida K20 community will be able to take advantage of wide range of resources under the Internet2 K20 initiative like master music classes using DVD or HD-quality videoconferencing or events like Megaconference Jr., an annual project that uses videoconferencing technology to bring together thousands of

students in elementary and secondary schools from around the world for an all-day learning conference. Students can also take part in immersive undersea exploration demonstrations with divers in remote locations around the world, among many other applications.

The K20 initiative has also recently launched a social networking site, called ³Muse² which provides a focal point for bringing diverse and geographically disparate individuals and groups together for collaboration using the Internet2 Network.

³FLR is pleased to enter into this collaboration with the University of South Florida, and Internet2 that will lead to enabling nearly all K20 Institutions in the state of Florida access to the Internet2 Network and other resources that FLR has to offer through its networking infrastructure,² said Dave Pokorney, chief technology officer and director of engineering of FLR and director of network services at the University of Florida.

Pokorney added, ³From the very beginning of its existence the essential goal of the Florida LambdaRail was to be Florida¹s Research and Education Network. With today¹s announcement that goal has been reached. To meet this goal FLR acquired 1540 miles of dark fiber, optical and transport electronics that that it owns, operates and manages from the Network Operations Center located in Gainesville, FL.
FLRNet is the foundation and enabling infrastructure providing all members a high performance fiber-optic network linking together its members to other resources throughout the world.²

For the first time, Florida K20 now has direct connectivity to a wide range of domestic and international research networks, including the
Internet2 Network. This puts Florida universities and K12 on equal and competitive footing with the best institutions in the nation, with the ability to communicate in ways not possible using previous networks.

For more information, visit: http://k20.internet2.edu

About Florida LambdaRail

Florida LambdaRail LLC (FLR) is a Florida limited liability company formed by member higher education institutions to advance optical research and education networking within Florida. Florida LambdaRail is a high-bandwidth optical network that links Florida's research institutions and provides a next-generation network in support of large-scale research, education outreach, public/private partnerships, and information technology infrastructure essential to Florida's economic development.   For more information:http://www.flrnet.org

About USF

The University of South Florida is one of the nation's top 63 public research universities and one of 39 community-engaged four-year public universities as designated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. USF was awarded more than $360 million in research contracts and grants in FY 2007/2008. The University offers
219 degree programs at the undergraduate, graduate, specialist and doctoral levels, including the doctor of medicine. The University has a $1.8 billion annual budget, an annual economic impact of $3.2 billion, and serves more than 46,000 students on campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota-Manatee and Lakeland. USF is a member of the Big East Athletic Conference.

About Internet2

Internet2 is the foremost U.S. advanced networking consortium. Led by the research and education community since 1996, Internet2 promotes the missions of its members by providing both leading-edge network capabilities and unique partnership opportunities that together facilitate the development, deployment and use of revolutionary Internet technologies. Internet2 brings the U.S. research and academic community together with technology leaders from industry, government and the international community to undertake collaborative efforts that have a fundamental impact on tomorrow's Internet.

For more information: http://www.internet2.edu/