Telecommunications grant doubles Alfred's 'pipeline'
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A $150,000 grant from the Rural Telecommunications Infrastructure Program, to be shared by Alfred University and Alfred State College, will "double the pipeline" bringing digital information to Alfred.State Senator Pat McGee, R-Franklinville, was in Alfred today to announce the awarding of the grant. The schools will use the funds to bring additional T1 lines to their campuses."We appreciate Senator McGee's assistance in helping us to address what is a serious problem for us," said Alfred University President Charles M. Edmondson. "Bandwidth, which is determined by the size of the fiber optic cable that transmits digital information, is a problem for every educational institution right now, but our problems are compounded by our location."Although the Village of Alfred is home to two institutions of higher education, its location on the western edge of the 607 area code, and in an area served by a telephone service provider other than Bell Atlantic, means that digital hook-ups are very costly. "Through Senator McGee's efforts on our behalf, we will, in effect, be able to double the number of T-1 lines serving our campus," said President Edmondson. "It may not be the ideal solution, but it certainly is a major step forward in meeting the ever-growing need for access to high-speed data lines."Telecommunications grant to Alfred 2-2-2"Alfred State is so fortunate to be represented by a high quality forward thinker like state Senator McGee," said Rezak. "Her constant concern for the quality of life of her constituents and the enhancement of the resources in the Southern Tier regularly result in the investment of the state in her district. "This critically important grant will allow Alfred University and Alfred State College to continue to develop video, audio, and data/information communications capability in this rural wonderland in which we are so fortunate to reside," added Rezak. Bravo, Sen. McGee! We pledge to put this money to good use as it helps to keep the College on the cutting edge of 21st century technology." "We are seeing significant increases in use of the internet," said Arolana Meissner, associate vice president for information services. "Last year, we received more than 15,000 requests for information on our library databases from off-campus users. We saw the overall requests for library database information go from 65,000 in 1998-99 to 330,000 in 1999-2000."Deborah Putnam, director of computing services for Alfred State is also seeing an increased demand for access to the internet. "It seems as if we discover new ways every day to use the internet at Alfred State," said Putnam. "We've seen it become an integral part of teaching and learning, in the classroom, and in the library. We're very excited about what this grant will do to help us improve not only the quality but also the scope of internet services at Alfred State College." As more and more prospective students gain access to the internet at home and at school, the number of internet "visitors" to campus grows, too, said Kitty McCarthy, AU's director of Admissions. "Many times, students learn about Alfred University through the web, and then 'visit' our campus electronically before actually coming to see the campus, or making the decision to apply."McCarthy noted that in the fall of 1998, Alfred University received 2 percent of its freshman applications on-line. By fall of 1999, that number had increased to 12 percent, and last year, to 28 percent. A similar trend is seen in transfer applications. In 1999, 23 percent of the transfer applications were made over the internet. By fall of 2000, that number had jumped to 52 percent.