Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Schools funded by the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs will receive a donation of $100,000 worth of computer hardware from Global Commercialization Foundation, a non-profit organization. The hardware will include routers, hubs, servers and other equipment needed to connect the schools to the Internet.

Global Commercialization Foundation was formed to develop financial and commercial infrastructure for American Indians using technology transfer, education and commercialization for sustainable growth in the global marketplace. Cabletron Systems of Herndon, VA, had donated the equipment to Global Commercialization Foundation. Cabletron is a $1.5 billion company that specializes in networking solutions.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Indian Education Programs operates and funds 185 elementary and secondary schools for Native American children. These schools are located in 23 states, on 63 reservations. The Bureau of Indian Affairs will use the donated equipment to finish the wiring and connecting its 185 schools to the Internet. The donation will assist 84 of its most isolated and remote schools to reach the Internet.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs began its efforts to connect its schools in 1997 as part of a "reinvention laboratory" which aims to connect Bureau-funded schools in the most remote areas of the United States. The schools are located in areas where fewer than 48 percent of the communities have access to telephones according to a recent Department of Commerce report.

The donation will enable the Office of Indian Education Programs to meet President Clinton's challenge to connect every Bureau of Indian Affairs' school to the Internet by the Year 2000.

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