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**Detroit Area Library Network To Build First-Ever Information Hub For Southeast Michigan**

**Ameritech, Library Consortium Plan Places Unique Community Information At The Fingertips Of Residents And Businesses**

DETROIT, Oct. 16 /PRNewswire/ -- The Detroit Area Library Network (DALNET) and Ameritech today announced plans to develop the Southeast Michigan Information Hub, a dynamic easy-to-use information system that, for the first time, will make important community information available online to all residents and businesses in the seven-county Detroit area regardless of whether they own a computer.

The hub, expected to be fully operational by the year 2000, will offer access to traditional library resources plus local economic development, health care, social services and community information. It will be the first of its type and a model for the nation.

"The Southeast Michigan Information Hub is designed to serve people throughout the seven-county Detroit regional area in their lifelong educational, cultural, research, professional and recreational endeavors," said Dr. Patricia Senn Breivik, DALNET president and dean of the Wayne State University Library System. "It will enable DALNET libraries to reach beyond the walls of the library and deliver text, images, sound and video to the desktop level and eventually to public kiosks."

DALNET is a uniquely diverse consortium made up of 21 libraries including public, community college, university, medical, law and art libraries located in Southeast Michigan. The consortium will team with Ameritech to build the hub using Ameritech Library Services' award-winning online library automation system, Horizon, and an Ameritech high-speed data communications network.

"Ameritech is devoted to offering libraries innovative, industry-leading products and services that keep them at the forefront of the information age," said Lana Porter, president of Ameritech Library Services. "The Southeast Michigan Information Hub will be the standard by which all similar projects are measured. Clearly DALNET is a pioneer in the library industry, and our technology is perfectly designed to carry out their vision."

**Information Hub Redefines Libraries' Role in Economic Development**

Already serving more than 500,000 people, DALNET plans to expand its participating institutions even further by including key government and business organizations, as well as community resources. As a result, community information providers will have an unparalleled opportunity to make their reports and other materials broadly available to the public via dial-up access or in settings where personal assistance is available, such as public, school and academic libraries.

Already, plans are under way to connect the Detroit Public Library and its 24 library facilities to the system in spring 1999. DALNET Vice Chair and Detroit Public Library Director Maurice Wheeler said, "The Detroit Public Library is uniquely positioned to deliver community access to all the wonderful information in the Southeast Michigan Information Hub. Customers throughout the city who do not have in-home or at-work Internet access can take full advantage of these resources."

The hub, with its broad accessibility, will change the role of the library for businesses and residents alike. And the benefits to southeast Michigan are incalculable. Research shows that small businesses spend two to four times as much as corporations with in-house libraries to obtain information they need for decision making. The hub will integrate and organize fragmented information and bring it to desktops of businesses. It is expected to produce an ongoing positive impact on the economic development of the region.

OCT-19-1998 13:43 FROM U D M

**Award-Winning Technology Brings DALNET Vision to Life**

DALNET's vision is anchored by industry-leading library automation technology from Ameritech Library Services, a subsidiary of Ameritech Corp. By the year 2000 all participating DALNET institutions will have migrated to Horizon with Resource Sharing, a library automation system recognized by the Smithsonian Institute for "making great strides toward remarkable social achievement in education." In addition, Ameritech will manage a high-speed data network that will connect all participating institutions using frame relay technology.

University of Detroit Mercy (UDM) is the first DALNET library to go "live" with the Horizon system. According to Margaret Auer, dean of the University of Detroit Mercy Libraries and chair of the DALNET Board, the new system is a hit already at UDM. "We are getting enthusiastic feedback from students and faculty," said Auer. "They are finding it easy to use and understand. We anticipated this reaction and are very pleased it has proved to be so positive."

Ameritech (NYSE: AIT) serves millions of customers in 50 states and 40 countries. Ameritech provides a full range of communications services including local and long-distance telephone, and data, cellular, paging, security, cable TV, Internet and more. One of the world's 100 largest companies, Ameritech ([www.ameritech.com](http://www.ameritech.com)) has 71,000 employees, 1 million shareowners and more than \$29 billion in assets.

The Detroit Area Library Network (DALNET), founded as a non-profit corporation in 1985, enables its members to better serve the information needs of their users through cooperative efforts among multi-type libraries in the Metropolitan Detroit area, and by sharing advanced library automation applications.

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/CONTACT: Rachel Huber of DALNET, 313-577-4149, e-mail, [ab16236@wayne.edu](mailto:ab16236@wayne.edu); or Rob Lanesey of Ameritech, 312-364-3616, e-mail, [rob.a.lanesey@ameritech.com](mailto:rob.a.lanesey@ameritech.com);

/Web site: <http://www.ameritech.com/>  
(AIT)

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