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## **LONI Connects Mississippi Schools**

The Louisiana Optical Network Initiative, or LONI, is collaborating with Mississippi's top research universities to provision access to commodity Internet and the research networks National LambdaRail, or NLR, and Internet2, or I2.

LONI is Louisiana's state-of-the-art fiber optics network connecting the state's major research institutions to one another, the two major research networks, commodity Internet and 85 teraflops of grid supercomputing resource. LONI established a point of presence, or POP, in Jackson, MS. Jackson State University, Mississippi State University, the University of Mississippi and the University of Southern Mississippi will use LONI's Jackson POP to access the National LambdaRail, Internet2, and the commodity Internet.

"LONI is built upon a spirit of cooperation, collaboration and innovation. This partnership across states signals the expansion of these principles and the prospect for great advances along the Gulf Coast," remarked Charlie McMahon, LONI executive director.

"This initiative with our sister institutions in Mississippi is further confirmation that the Gulf South is wired for the technological future," said Les Guice, Louisiana Tech Vice President for Research and Development and chair of the LONI Management Council. "We anticipate many mutual benefits as a result of this collaboration."

The switch to LONI stemmed from the nationwide decommissioning of Internet2's Abilene Network. Mississippi needed another path to the new Internet2 network resources. Additionally this new route marks the first time these Mississippi institutions will have access to the National LambdaRail.