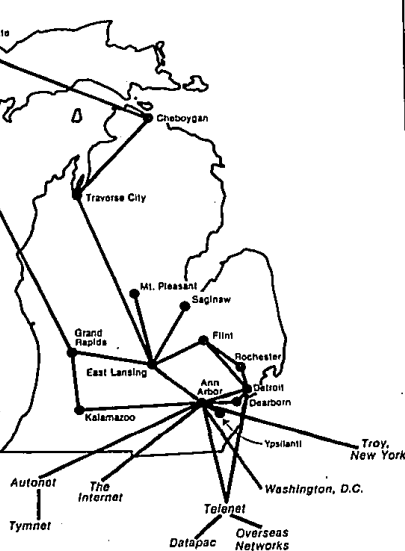


State U's in national computer network

Merit Computer Network
November 1987



Several Oakland County communities — Rochester Hills, Southfield and Birmingham — are among those that eventually will be tied into the nationwide supercomputer network. Managing the national system will be Merit Inc., a consortium of eight Michigan colleges, including Oakland University. Map source: Center for Cartographic Research and Spatial Analysis, Michigan State University.

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Ann Arbor will be headquarters of a network linking the nation's six supercomputers, a host of officials announced Tuesday.

"The single most important research project ever brought to the state," said Gov. James J. Blanchard in a news conference on the Wayne State University campus in Detroit. "Brainpower is the key."

John Moore, deputy director of the National Science Foundation, announced a \$14 million grant to Merit Inc., a consortium of eight state-supported universities, to upgrade and manage NSFNet.

Total federal-state-business investment will be \$46 million over five years, with \$30 million being in Michigan.

THE NETWORK is to computers what freeways are to automobiles, reducing the flow of information between researchers literally to seconds.

"National security and economic progress both depend on research and development," Moore said. Merit's partners are Central Michigan University, Eastern Michigan University, Oakland University, Michigan State University, Michigan Technological University, the University of Michigan, Wayne State University and Western Michigan University.

NSFNet's home will be remodeled Merit Inc. buildings on the University of Michigan campus, said Douglas Van Houweling, U-M vice provost for information technology and chairman of Merit.

It is expected to be operating by



next April, providing 20 jobs.

It will link supercomputers at six sites — San Diego Supercomputer Center; University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; National Center of Atmospheric Research at Boulder, Colo.; Pittsburgh Supercomputer Center; Cornell University, in New York State; and the John von Neumann Center at Princeton, N.J.

"PARTNERSHIP" was the theme of the news conference.

• The federal government provided NSF \$14 million for the grant to Merit.

• The Michigan Strategic Fund, Blanchard's state investment tool, will provide \$5 million.

• IBM Corp. will provide \$20 million. IBM will develop software and provide hardware for switching systems located at each NSF supercomputer site and regional network center.

• MCI Communications Corp., a long-distance telephone company, will provide \$7 million.

MCI, the country's second-largest long-distance company, will provide a nationwide digital data network between the local, regional and national research organizations.

WSU President David W. Adamany praised Blanchard's "very substantial investment in higher education."

"States are increasingly important because education is the basis of this technology," added NSF's Moore, praising Michigan's "great universities and strong tradition of support for higher education."

The new network will upgrade existing regional linkages.

The high-speed network eventually will link thousands of researchers working across the nation in technology, space exploration, medicine, defense and other programs that require extensive communication and computation.

REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES such as Oakland will be able to access the research.

Merit's links to the Internet and to the public data networks in North America provide the state a connection to computer services throughout the world.

Researchers will be able to send experimental data quickly to a collaborator on another campus or watch the graphic result of a simulation on a supercomputer thousands of miles away.

They may also send a paper to a publisher with camera-ready page layouts and graphics.

Chocolate party fights Alzheimer's

The second annual Chocolate Jubilee for Alzheimer's Disease victims and their families will begin at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 6, in Somerset Inn, 2801 W. Big Beaver, Troy.

Samples of chocolate desserts and candies will be offered. More than 30 restaurants and chocolate-makers will be represented, event organizers said.

A patron brunch will be served at noon. General admission is \$25 per person in advance, \$30 at the door.

The patron brunch is \$100, including

admission to the Chocolate Jubilee. Reservations can be made by sending a check to the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association Inc., 17251 W. 12 Mile, Southfield. Additional information is available by calling 557-4277.

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive, incurable neurological disorder that has struck an estimated 2.5 million Americans. While most victims are older than 65, the disease has been known to strike persons as young as 40.

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