

CyberInfrastructure (CI) Days at Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs): A MSI-CIEC Update in a Changing Climate

Richard Alo¹, Karl Barnes², Diane Baxter³, Julie Foertsch⁴, Geoffrey Fox⁵, Al Kuslikis⁶, Alex Ramirez⁷

1) University of Houston Downtown, Center for Computational Science, One main street, Suite 722 South, Houston, TX 77002, www.uhd.edu/ccsds, ralo@uh.edu

2) NAFEO: National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education <http://www.nafeo.org>

3) SDSC: San Diego Supercomputer Center, 9500 Gilman Drive, MC-0505, La Jolla, CA 92093-0505 www.sdsc.org,

4) Leading Edge Evaluation & Consulting, University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI, <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/8/9a7/4a9>

5) Computer Science Department, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405 USA, <http://www.informatics.indiana.edu/research/profiles/gcf.asp>

6) AIHEC: The American Indian Higher Education Consortium <http://www.aihec.org/>

7) Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), 8415 Datapoint Drive, Suite 400, San Antonio, TX 78229 <http://www.hacu.net>

Abstract

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the “Stimulus Bill”, and the renewal of the Higher Education Act, provide new context, significance, opportunities and obstacles for Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), their campus CyberInfrastructure (CI) as well as the national CI, including TeraGrid (TG). Working directly with MSIs to: raise executive and faculty awareness about CI; explore possible engagement strategies for CI, and initiate strategic planning for such engagement has new significance for MSIs, CI and TG. A major function of the NSF CI TEAM, Minority Serving Institutions- CyberInfrastructure Empowerment Coalition (MSI-CIEC, NSF OCI-0636352) undertakes this effort through campus visits and assessments, referred to as CI Days. This presentation addresses MSI-CIEC and CI Days models as well as the potential of utilizing CI to enhance the quality of education with added benefits of impacting recruitment and retention at MSIs and all institutions. We address this broader context, its relationship to prior CI Days, their specific outcomes, and significance of the lessons learned. The need for campuses to understand the strategic importance of CI, like partnering with TeraGrid, extends beyond MSIs, and is the purpose of a collaboration of Internet2, National Lambda Rail, Educause, Open Science Grid and TeraGrid in which MSI-CIEC participates. MSI campuses are an efficient, and as some of the data indicate, an effective venue for educating and broadening the participation of underrepresented minorities, African American, Native American and Hispanics, in CI, the TeraGrid, and STEM.