

NEWS RELEASE

Release Date: February 5, 2009

*Contact: Hood Harris, AT&T, 205-215-5520
Pete Smith Director of Communications, 601-359-1336*

AT&T Foundation contributes to Mississippi Center for Education Innovation *Grant Will Support "Early Educators" Program*

Jackson, MS – The Mississippi Center for Education Innovation today announced that the AT&T Foundation, the philanthropy arm of AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T), has awarded it a \$475,000, two year grant. The gift will support an innovative "Early Educators" program, which will provide 21st century instructional interventions in tutorial settings for Delta students.

In partnership with the Kellogg Foundation and the Mississippi Department of Education, the Mississippi Center for Education Innovation aims to improve student achievement, teacher quality/quantity, community engagement and early childhood education. The "Early Educators" program will provide instructional interventions to younger students from older students, using iPods and instructional podcasts.

"In today's world, it is crucial our students gain exposure to innovative methods of learning," said AT&T Mississippi President Mayo Flynt. "We are excited to support the Mississippi Center for Education Innovation as they combine technology and innovative teaching methods to bring new educational opportunities to our students."

"All students can learn, but some need multiple instructional strategies, and this program allows those individual needs to be met," said Dr. Lana C. Seivers, Executive Director, Mississippi Center for Education Innovation. "The program also helps address the shortage of future educators in our region. We appreciate AT&T's spirit and support in this endeavor."

"Technology is increasingly becoming the norm in the overall learning experience of our boys and girls. Having the ability to use iPods and podcasts as instructional tools for the (Early Educators) program will not only improve a student's ability to learn but will continue to improve Mississippi's overall education system," State Superintendent of Education Dr. Hank M. Bounds said.

The program will help increase student interest and will expose middle and high school students to teaching as a possible career choice by developing the tutor-tutee relationship. The Mississippi Center for Education Innovation is partnering with the Mississippi Department of Education and Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning on this project.

###



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

teach_learn_live

About Mississippi Center for Education Innovation

The MS Center for Education Innovation (MSCEI) opened in July 2008 and is a non-profit Education organization funded initially by the W.K.Kellogg Foundation. The Center's programs and activities will be focused on ways to reach the goals adopted by the MS State Board to transform education in Mississippi:

1. To reduce the dropout rate to 13% by 2013
2. To reach the national average on national assessments by 2013
3. To ensure that all students exit Third Grade reading on grade level by 2020

The Center has the responsibility to harness its efforts and resources to address the drop-out rate, student achievement on a national test, and reading levels. The Center's initiatives are in the areas of teacher quality and development, leadership quality and development, community engagement, and literacy and early childhood education. There are numerous directions that can lead to attainment of these goals, yet all paths must address the history, culture and challenges unique to Mississippi. The Center, in collaboration with its Board of Directors, has begun to engage in initiatives with a network of education advocates, including the Mississippi Department of Education. The development and implementation of successful education models has implications for replication in schools and districts throughout the state and the southeast. MSCEI is located in the City Centre South building (Suite 100S) in Jackson, Mississippi.

About AT&T

AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T) is a premier communications holding company. Its subsidiaries and affiliates, AT&T operating companies, are the providers of AT&T services in the United States and around the world. Among their offerings are the world's most advanced IP-based business communications services and the nation's leading wireless, high speed Internet access and services. In domestic markets, AT&T is known for the directory publishing and advertising sales leadership of its Yellow Pages and YELLOWPAGES.COM organizations, and the AT&T brand is licensed to innovators in such fields as communications equipment. As part of its three-screen integration strategy, AT&T is expanding its TV entertainment offerings. In 2008, AT&T again ranked No. 1 on *Fortune* magazine's World's Most Admired Telecommunications Company list and No. 1 on America's Most Admired Telecommunications Company list. Additional information about AT&T Inc. and the products and services provided by AT&T subsidiaries and affiliates is available at <http://www.att.com>.

About Philanthropy at AT&T

AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T) is committed to advancing education, strengthening communities and improving lives. Through its philanthropic initiatives and partnerships, AT&T supports projects that create learning opportunities; promote academic and economic achievement; and address community needs. In 2007, AT&T contributed more than \$164 million through corporate-, employee- and AT&T Foundation-giving programs. AT&T and the AT&T Foundation, the corporate philanthropy organization of AT&T, combine more than \$1.9 billion of historic charitable commitment to communities across the country.

© 2009. AT&T Intellectual Property. All rights reserved. AT&T and the AT&T logo are trademarks of AT&T Intellectual Property.

About Mississippi Department of Education

The Mississippi Department of Education is the state agency charged with oversight of all public K-12 schools in Mississippi, which includes over 1,000 schools in 152 districts, enrolling over 490,000 students. More information on the Mississippi Department of Education can be found at www.mde.k12.ms.us.



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

teach_learn_live



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

teach_learn_live