

For Immediate Release

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GLOBALORIA EDUCATION PROGRAM PREPARING WV STUDENTS FOR DIGITAL WORLD

NEW YORK, NY - Students across the Mountain State are learning how to become active citizens in today's increasingly connected and digital world through Globaloria, an innovative global educational program that launched last summer in West Virginia with funding from the State of West Virginia and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation. Today, Verizon West Virginia also demonstrated its support and vision with a grant to continue expanding the program in 2008.

The Globaloria program, established in 2006 by the World Wide Workshop Foundation, uses the latest Web 2.0 and social media technology to empower young people from around the world to learn how to create interactive games and simulations, collaborate online and solve problems together. Its activities help students sharpen their communication and critical-thinking skills for leadership online and offline, bringing them closer to the participatory and collaborative nature of work in the 21st century. Globaloria is currently running in countries across the globe, and will continue to expand in 2008 both domestically and internationally.

In July 2007, the Office of Governor Joe Manchin invited the World Wide Workshop Foundation to partner with the State of West Virginia and Benedum Foundation to launch Globaloria-WV. Since then, 14 educators and 65 students from six schools across the state have been learning Internet media technology and game-development skills.

West Virginia First Lady Gayle Manchin said, "I am so pleased and appreciative of Verizon joining this collaboration. Everyone on this team— Benedum, Verizon, World Wide Workshop -- brings great expertise and commitment to the table, and I am so grateful on behalf of the state of West Virginia. I am so proud to see all that is already happening through the Globaloria program in West Virginia in its short time of operations. It is 21st-Century-Skills being exemplified, and as we can all see in the field when we visit, the students are excited and engaged."

Dr. Idit Caperton, president and founder of the World Wide Workshop Foundation, said Globaloria and its virtual learning platforms challenge students more than typical curriculum.

“Through project-based teamwork and a great deal of self-learning in a virtual space, students around the world with no prior experience in computer programming or using Web 2.0 tools, become wiki producers and digital designers of web-based software applications for social change and educational purposes,” Caperton said. “These valuable skills prepare young people to become leaders in the digital and global marketplace.”

Globaloria’s emphasis on technology and education matches closely with Verizon’s goal to support the use of technology to improve literacy and K-12 education. Verizon West Virginia’s grant will help to further expand the program in 2008, said B. Keith Fulton, president of Verizon West Virginia.

“Globaloria gives West Virginia students a unique opportunity to develop critical 21st-century job skills,” Fulton said. “Verizon looks forward to working with our partners to expand this engaging, online learning environment for our state.”

Jim Denova, vice president of the Benedum Foundation, said, “The Benedum Foundation is very pleased to have invested in this first-year demonstration of Globaloria in West Virginia. We are always looking for innovation in education, and Globaloria is proving to be an effective instructional tool that has broad application to a number of educational settings, be they high schools, colleges, or community-based after-school programs.”

Program officials are currently accepting applications for more educators and students in WV high schools, community colleges and universities to join this spring, with plans to double the size of the program in West Virginia and internationally by end of 2008. The Globaloria program works best when implemented as a daily activity at school or a college, Caperton said. It also provides opportunities for alumni internships and employment via the Internet.

Dr. Lee Kraus, Globaloria-WV Program Manager, said, “Our participating students and educators become skilled users of the latest technology; they learn to be active contributors, collaborators, designers and programmers of the Internet. Simultaneously, they develop life and professional skills needed to be productive and globally aware – prepared to take on leadership roles in the innovation economy and the fast-changing, digital world we live in.”

For more information about the program, contact: **info@worldwideworkshop.org**.

Globaloria-WV Network: www.MyGlobalLife.org/usa/wv

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The World Wide Workshop Foundation is a global, non-profit educational organization. Its mission is to harness the potential of computers and the Internet to enhance technological fluency for creative learning, leadership, innovation, and livelihood skills among children and youth worldwide. The foundation works in collaboration with forward-thinking leaders, corporations, universities, and research centers worldwide to enrich existing formal and non-formal education with the latest technology and innovative learning opportunities for underserved and high-potential youth. (For more information: www.WorldWideWorkshop.org and www.MyGlobalLife.org/usa/wv).

The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation is an independent foundation established in 1944 by Michael and Sarah Benedum, natives respectively of Bridgeport and Blacksville, West Virginia. They named the Foundation in memory of their only child, Claude Worthington Benedum, who died in 1918 at age 20. The Benedums expressed the wish that grantmaking be focused in West Virginia and Southwestern Pennsylvania, their native and adopted homes.

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