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Project Lead The Way® Receives National Recognition from the Education Commission of the States
Organization Works to Strengthen Math and Science Education

DENVER, CO -- The Education Commission of the States (ECS) is pleased to award Project Lead The Way® (PLTW) the 2009 ECS Corporate Award. The tribute honors for-profit corporations or non-profit organizations with sustained commitment to and investment in improving public education. The award will be presented by Minnesota Governor and ECS Chair Tim Pawlenty as part of the 2009 National Forum on Education Policy, July 8-10 in Nashville, Tenn.

Collaborating with schools, industry, state government and universities, PLTW works to build future generations of successful engineers and technology savvy graduates. PLTW supports a series of middle and high school courses that are project-centered, problem-based and technology-integrated, preparing students to excel in high-tech fields. With rigorous and relevant context tied to national standards, the program responds to a common student question: “Why do I have to learn this?”

“This is a perfect example of a public/private partnership engaging and challenging students to apply their skills and knowledge to real life situations,” notes ECS President Roger Sampson.

Project Lead The Way leadership believe that when schools apply activities and problem-based learning, they generate an “increase in student motivation, an increase in cooperative learning skills, higher-order thinking and an improvement in student achievement.” Research has shown this to be true. According to an evaluation by High Schools That Work, PLTW students scored significantly higher in both mathematics and science high school assessments. The National Center for Education Statistics 2006-07 True Outcomes report explains that students who participate in PLTW are five times more likely to graduate college as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) majors than those who do not.

The organization was started in the 1980s in upstate New York by Richard Blais and Richard Liebich, becoming an independent not-for-profit organization in 1997. Today, the program is expanding across the country with an eye to new and engaging curriculum.

“We are extremely honored to receive this award, particularly at a time when our country needs a new generation of innovators to remain economically competitive in the 21st century global economy,” said John Lock, CEO of Project Lead The Way. “We remain committed to attracting more students to science, math, engineering and tech fields in the coming years by expanding the reach of PLTW’s critical-thinking and project-based curriculum to more schools around the country. By helping students apply what they learn in math and science to innovation and real life problem-solving, we can create America’s next “Innovation Generation’ and regain our economic competitive advantage.”
The Education Commission of the States (ECS) is the only nationwide, nonpartisan interstate compact devoted to education. ECS helps governors, legislators, state education officials and others identify, develop and implement public policies to improve student learning at all levels. A nonprofit organization, ECS (www.ecs.org) was formed in 1965 and is located in Denver, Colorado.

Project Lead The Way® is a national 501c3, not-for-profit educational program that helps give middle and high school students the rigorous ground-level education they need to develop strong backgrounds in science and engineering. For more information, please visit: http://www.pltw.org.