

Classroom Connect Names 2002 Internet Educator of the Year

Chemistry Teacher Honored for His Website, www.allatoms.com

CHICAGO, March 13

Classroom Connect, today at its annual Connected Conference(TM) in Chicago, named chemistry teacher William Gray Rushin the Classroom Connect Internet Educator of the Year for 2002. Rushin, of Cary Academy in Raleigh, North Carolina, is being recognized for his resourcefulness in integrating the Internet with classroom activities, and for his leadership in furthering Internet usage among educators. Earlier in the year, Rushin earned Classroom Connect's Internet Educator of the Year regional award for the southern United States.

The Internet Educator of the Year award program selects four regional winners (West, Northeast/International, South and Central) who are then evaluated for the national title. As the national winner, Rushin will receive \$5,000 cash and \$5,000 in products and services from Classroom Connect and serve on the company's Board of Advisors for one year. In addition, he will receive a iPAQ Pocket PC and laptop computer from Compaq Computer Corporation, an all expense paid trip to Costa Rica from Natural Habitat Adventures.

"Gray has truly earned the title of national Internet Educator of the Year," said Rem Jackson, vice president of professional development for Classroom Connect. "He has affected the use of Web technologies not only locally but also on a national and even international basis. Last year, he found that his influence had reached as far as Venezuela."

"After the initial shock and euphoria began to wear off, I settled into calmer feelings of thanks and honor. As news of the award spread through our school community, I received many kind remarks in a variety of forms. Now I have realized that I better get back to work because I have a lot to live up to," said Rushin. "Thanks Classroom Connect -- you have added new energy to my projects and excitement for the vision I have of my future classroom."

Winning Entry

Rushin posts weekly schedules of activities and assignments to his "All Atoms" Web site (<http://www.allatoms.com>) so students can plan ahead for classes. He also posts course outlines and objectives, lab safety rules, his grading scheme, guidelines for lab reports or creating Web pages, and miscellaneous reference materials.

The site links to a "Student Projects" library that currently houses over 200 student-authored sites showcasing project research. The site section "Adventures of an Alchemist -- At the Movies" presents student-shot films of various experiments.

Rushin's Internet activities are not limited to the site. He supplements classroom activities with a site called "Chemistry Place," which is designed for high school and college students. In addition, he subscribes to the University of West Florida's ChemEd listserv for his own professional development.

The other regional winners of the Internet Educator of the Year award are: history teacher Dan McDowell of West Hills High School in Santee, California (West winner); computer graphics instructor Jim Rusconi of Coyle and Cassidy High School in Taunton, Massachusetts (North & International winner); and first grade teacher Gayle Berthiaume of Becker Elementary School in Becker, Minnesota (Central winner).

McDowell's winning entry, a Web site entitled, "Dan McDowell Online" at <http://www.guhsd.net/mcdowell> , features assignment calendars, tips for student success, and guidelines explaining grading, course descriptions and classroom rules. Students and their parents have password-protected access to grades and progress reports online. The site also contains "A Viewing Guide to World History," a Web-based project that helps students to correlate artistic movements and relevant historical events or eras.

Rusconi's Virtual Cell Web Page (www.virtualcell.com) began in 1995 as an outreach program from Brown University in which students were challenged to create 3-D models for use on the Internet. The project has transformed into a school-based ongoing collaborative effort for teachers and students in Rusconi's school departments of science, computer graphics and world languages. The site's Virtual Cell Tour and Virtual Textbook use interactivity and animation to engage the visual learner's interest.

Berthiaume's site, "First Grade Online," which contains a news page, resources for parents, and links to children's activities at: <http://homepage.mac.com/gaylejb/FirstGradeOnline.htm> . Parents and children stay in touch during the school day via e-mail, and Berthiaume uses e-mail to communicate regularly with parents. She encourages her pupils to research topics on the Internet or use software to facilitate creative projects. Berthiaume's pupils also rate the software they've used in class through her WeeRate Web page.

About The Internet Educator of the Year Award

The Internet Educator of the Year is an educator who embraces Internet resources and technologies and successfully integrates them into the classroom. He or she recognizes the immense possibilities for learning the Internet offers teachers and students and has incorporated these profound new tools into his/her teaching, lifting students to new and exciting heights. He or she is a teacher first, demonstrating and sharing a love of learning and using the Internet as a tool for learning with those around them -- both students and faculty -- and is an inspiration to everyone who has or is struggling with combining the professional act of teaching with the realities of a completely wired future.

About Classroom Connect

Classroom Connect, Inc., a business unit within Harcourt, Inc., is a leading provider of professional learning and classroom learning resources that foster successful use of the Internet in K-12 education. Headquartered in Brisbane, CA, with offices in El Segundo, CA, Minneapolis, MN, and Abilene, TX, Classroom Connect has more than 170 employees. Its primary product brands include: Connected University(R) (online professional development); Classroom Today(TM) (online classroom curriculum); The Quest Channel(TM) (online adventure learning expeditions); Connected Conferences(TM) (live, nationwide events); Connected Workshops(TM) (on-site seminars); and Classroom Connect Newsletter(TM) (monthly Internet education journal). Its partners include some of the nation's most respected organizations, including the American

Museum of Natural History, the Library of Congress, The Franklin Institute Online, and NASA. For more information about Classroom Connect, visit the company's Web site at www.classroom.com.

CONTACT: Lisa Grantham of Classroom Connect, +1-650-351-5137, or lgrantham@classroom.com; or Kati Elliott of KEH Communications, +1-410-975-9638, or kati@kehcomm.com, for Classroom Connect