

Education Division News

For Immediate Release:

SIIA Communications Contact: Laura Greenback, 202.789.4469, lgreenback@siiia.net

PR Contact: Brittany Dorfner, C. Blohm & Associates, 608.839.9800, brittany@cblohm.com

Ed Tech Industry Names Three Leading Innovators in Personalized Learning

New technologies receive honors in SIIA's Innovation Incubator Program

Washington, D.C. (May 25, 2011) – More than 380 ed tech industry executives voted to select three companies honored Monday as “The Most Innovative” and “The Most Likely to Succeed in the Ed Tech Market” from 11 finalists participating in the 2011 Ed Tech Industry Summit’s Innovation Incubator Program. The Education Division of the Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA) partnered with lead Innovation Incubator Sponsor, Blackboard Inc. (Blackboard), to host these, and eight other developers of new solutions that support personalized learning, at this hallmark industry conference. The individual award honorees include:

“Most Innovative Education Product or Service” award:

- GiftedSpeech for GiftedSpeech (winner)
- Capstone Digital for myON reader (runner-up)

“Most Likely to Succeed in the Education Market” award:

- Capstone Digital for myON reader (winner)
- Virtual Nerd for Dynamic Whiteboard (runner-up)

Additionally, Blackboard selected Virtual Nerd to receive a year-long membership in the *Blackboard Partnerships™* Program. Among other benefits, Blackboard partners receive a developer edition of the *Blackboard Learn™* platform, access to the thousands of clients using the *Blackboard Learn* platform, a product listing on the Blackboard Extensions™ online directory, personalized guidance on the partnership, and participation at members-only events.

“We’re honored to have teamed up with SIIA for this year’s Innovation Incubator Program at the Ed Tech Industry Summit,” said Ted Hopper, Sr. Director, Business Development at Blackboard. “While all of the participants have pioneered original developments aimed to enhance personalized learning, we’re proud to add Virtual Nerd to the Blackboard Partnerships Program for its presentation of Dynamic Whiteboard.”

This cycle of the Innovation Incubator Program focused on education technologies that customize learning to meet individual student needs, and was open to applicants from academic and non-profit institutions, pre-revenue and early-stage companies, and longstanding companies with newly developed technologies. Judges reviewed 35 entries that target the K-12 and postsecondary markets.

Applicants were assessed on a broad range of selection criteria, including the degree to which their submission represented a student-driven learning path, flexible anytime/anywhere learning, project-based/authentic learning, adaptive mastery/competency-based progression or pace, and other characteristics of a truly personalized learning solution. Ten finalists and one alternate were selected to showcase their products or services at the Summit this week:

- Awear Technologies for Neurocognitive Training for Reading Comprehension
- Brain Hurricane/Wowzers for Wowzers
- Capstone Digital for myON reader
- eSpindle Learning for Pay-Per-Result at LearnThatWord

- GiftedSpeech for GiftedSpeech
- GoKnow for GoKnow
- McGraw-Hill Education for McGraw-Hill Spark!
- Sokikom for Sokikom
- Sixredmarbles for Cabanga
- PrepMe for Coursification
- Virtual Nerd for Dynamic Whiteboard

Finalists presented their innovations to the ed tech industry May 22-23 in the Summit's Business Profiles Presentations, Innovation Showcase and Welcome Reception, and live product demonstrations. During the conference, program participants received industry-wide recognition and peer-to-peer mentorship, and introductions to prospective investors, and companies seeking partnerships and acquisition candidates.

"The decision to focus our 2011 program on personalized learning was influenced by feedback received from more than 150 education leaders who met during our Symposium for Personalized Learning, after recognizing the need for a redesign of our K-12 education system," said Karen Billings, Vice President of the Education Division for SIIA. "Through the program, we've successfully identified developers of innovative, personalized learning solutions that aim to improve student-centered learning, helping to shift the education model toward a more individualized approach."

The Innovation Incubator Program supports innovation in the education technology industry by raising the profile of promising new technologies, while connecting innovators with captains of industry for mentorship, expert advice, investment opportunities and partnerships to support growth. To learn more about the Innovation Incubator Program and the Ed Tech Industry Summit, visit www.edtechindustrysummit.net.

About SIIA

The Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA) is the principal trade association for the software and digital content industry. SIIA provides global services in government relations, business development, corporate education and intellectual property protection to more than 500 leading software and information companies. **The SIIA Education Division** serves and represents more than 150 member companies that provide software, digital content and other technologies that address educational needs. The Division shapes and supports the industry by providing leadership, advocacy, business development opportunities and critical market information. For more information, visit www.sii.net/education.

About Blackboard Partnerships™ Program

Did you know hundreds of partners help Blackboard clients around the globe meet their unique needs? The Blackboard Partnerships™ Program teams with content providers, media and technology companies, system integrators and more. Together, we help clients do more to engage and assess learners, increase safety and convenience, and take the education experience mobile. To learn more about Blackboard Partnerships™ Program, visit www.blackboard.com/partnerships. (* Subject to additional terms and conditions.)

###