

# NEWS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Top U.S. Teachers Gather In Denver for Discovery Education's Second Discovery Educator Network Summit**

*"Storytelling in the digital age" the focus of day-long event*

**Silver Spring, MD** (October 25, 2005) – Nine of the nation's top educators converged in Denver, Colorado today for the second Discovery Educator Network Summit—"Beyond Words: Digital Storytelling." Awarded scholarships by Discovery Education to attend the Summit and National School Boards Association's T+L<sup>2</sup> conference, these educators are the newest members of the Discovery Educator Network—a nationwide community of teacher-innovators who use digital media to make learning more meaningful and engaging.

"The mission of the Discovery Educator Network is to bring together a dynamic community of educators who are using digital media to make their classrooms more exciting and their lessons more effective," said Coni Rechner, vice president, Discovery Educator Network. "The educators joining us in Denver this week will leave inspired by all of the great ideas and stories they've shared, enlightened by the many tools and resources that are available to use in the classroom, and empowered to return to school and use these new skills to inspire and collaborate with their peers."

"Beyond Words: Digital Storytelling" is being facilitated by renowned education consultant Bernajeau Porter. An expert in large-scale systemic change, Porter uses the application of systems thinking and chaos theory to meet the challenges of change and re-culturing efforts in schools today. Participating in the Summit, the latest "class" of Discovery Educators includes:

#### **Alan Engle**

*Instructional Technology Specialist*  
Rockwall ISD (Rockwall, Texas)

A former classroom teacher and Disney Teacher of the Year, Engle has worked to develop and implement district technology initiatives and has presented at local, state, and national education conferences. He has an amazing gift for motivating teachers to utilize technology to develop well-prepared, active learners.

**Danielle Abernethy**

*Instructional Technology Coach*

Sumter School District Two (Sumter, SC)

A middle school math teacher prior to becoming an instructional technology coach, Abernethy frequently presents on educational technology topics at conferences around the country, including NECC, where her workshop was voted one of NECC's "Best of the Best 2004." She received the Inspired Teacher Scholarship in 2002, 2003, and 2005, and was voted Tech4Learning's November 2004 Teacher of the Year.

**Joe Brennan**

*Visual Literacy Facilitator*

Niles Township High School District 219 (Niles Township, IL)

Brennan has led technology workshops at a number of state and national technology conferences and was honored as the Educator of the Year in 2003 by the Illinois Computing Educators. He is currently working on a digital storytelling initiative designed to showcase the efforts of teachers and students through a website titled "Digital Stories."

**RJ Stangerhlin**

*English 11 and Honors English 11*

Salisbury High School (Salisbury Township School District, PA)

Stangerhlin has presented at numerous educational conferences, including NECC 2005, and is also part of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's inaugural class of Keystones: Technology Integrators. This year, Stangerhlin is piloting a yearlong integrated, interdisciplinary, technology-driven project that makes her students' PowerPoint presentations come alive in their culminating performances.

**Jeanne Halderson**

*7th Grade Teacher*

Longfellow Middle School (La Crosse, WI)

Wisconsin's 1st DEN educator, Halderson has a passion for the integration of digital media in the classroom and inspiring students through rich, multi-sensory environments. Longfellow Middle School's "School in the Coulee" is just one example of the community-based, authentic projects developed by Halderson and her students.

**Sue Summerford**

*Educational Technology Coordinator*

Lenawee Intermediate School District (Adrian, MI)

Summerford is beginning her fifth year as an educational technology coordinator with the Lenawee Intermediate School District. She conducts numerous ongoing professional development workshops with Lenawee County educators, and recently developed the Navigator Series and REBOOT 2005 to promote integration of technology into classroom curriculum while helping teachers develop basic navigation skills with computer resources.

**Linda Redden**

*Media Specialist*

Alamo Heights Junior School (San Antonio, TX)

Redden has 25+ years experience teaching language arts at the middle and high school level prior to becoming a media specialist. The past five years at Alamo Heights Junior School have allowed her to blend her expertise in English and reading instruction with her passion for technology and curriculum development, using the Media Center as the hub of research, resources, and rejuvenation.

**Jennifer Harkleroad**

*Media Specialist*

Thomas Crossroads Elementary School (Sharpsburg, GA)

Harkleroad is a true shining star, selected as the school's 2005 Teacher of the Year. As a media specialist, she helps teachers feel more comfortable using various technologies to enhance their teaching and their students' learning. Harkleroad believes that technology "hooks" students in this information age, and can easily be integrated into the curriculum with a little effort.

**Brian Talmadge**

*5th grade teacher*

La Presa Elementary School (San Diego, CA)

Talmadge just returned to the classroom after working in the school's technology department. In his district he is well known for the creative movies he produces to make learning more exciting for his students. His high energy, love of technology, and dedication to his students make him the perfect Discovery Educator.

For more information about the Discovery Educator Network—including information about joining—visit [www.discoveryeducatornetwork.com](http://www.discoveryeducatornetwork.com). For information about any of Discovery Education's other products and services, visit [www.discoveryeducation.com](http://www.discoveryeducation.com).

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