

## FYI NOTE



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### **ePals Honored with Two 2009 EDDIE Awards from ComputED Learning Center**

**Herndon, Va.** (Oct. 8, 2009) – ePals, Inc., has been honored with two 2009 [Annual Education Software Review Awards](#) (EDDIES) from the ComputED Learning Center. The company’s curriculum-based e-mentoring program, *In2Books*® ([www.in2books.com](http://www.in2books.com)), was recognized as the Best Language Arts Web site for Early Elementary, and the ePals Global Community™ ([www.epals.com](http://www.epals.com)) was awarded Best Internet Communication Web site in the Multi-Level category.

*In2Books* is a curriculum-based e-mentoring program that enables educators and community members to create independent learners with strong literacy skills through the use of online collaborative technology. Through the *In2Books* program, 3rd-5th graders select and read age-appropriate, high-quality books from a list compiled by a team of children’s literature experts. The students are matched with carefully screened adult pen pals who read the same books as the students. After reading each book, students and their pen pals exchange thoughts about the important issues in the book via online letters. Teachers reinforce these activities in the classroom with related lessons and discussion. Students, adult pen pals and teachers are coached with dedicated resources on individually designed Web sites – Student Place, Pen Pal Place and Teacher Place.

In an EDDIE Awards review, judges wrote that *In2Books* “trains teachers to effectively implement and monitor exchanges in the classroom.” In addition, they stated, “The most exciting aspect of the program is the authenticity of the publishing experience the students have. They are sharing their lives and thoughts with a grown-up, and the motivation to improve their reading, comprehension and writing skills is huge. *In2Books* is a shining example of what thoughtful educators can do with best-practice methods without a whole lot of funds.”

“*In2Books* brings adult role models, an authentic curriculum and high-quality teacher resources together in one program. These learning opportunities are critical to students, empowering them to master the key literacy skills they need, while encouraging them to become more ambitious learners,” said Nina Zolt, Founder of *In2Books* and Co-Founder of ePals, Inc. “We are pleased that the ComputED Learning Center has recognized both *In2Books* and the ePals Global Community.”

*In2Books* was created in 1997 by Zolt, Chief Learning Officer for ePals and *In2Books*, who works closely with the *In2Books*/ePals team, teachers and students and nationally-renowned literacy experts to inspire children to become curious, independent learners by reading and writing about

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books of different genres with adult mentors. ePals, Inc., was formed in 2007 through the combination of ePals Classroom Exchange and In2Books, two companies whose products had been pioneering the application of collaboration and technology to the transformation of education for more than a decade. The ePals Foundation was started in 2008 to facilitate the provision of its programs, including *In2Books*, to economically challenged and disadvantaged students throughout the globe.

Also recognized with a 2009 EDDIE, the ePals Global Community is the largest online community of K-12 learners, enabling more than half a million educators and millions of students across 200 countries and territories to safely connect, exchange ideas and work together. The global community allows educators to access a variety of social networking tools and high-quality content that encourage students to communicate and collaborate with their peers around the world.

The ePals Global Community also was recognized by the ComputED Learning Center with a 2009 [Annual Best Educational Software Awards](#) (BESSIE) for Best Internet Communication Web site in the Multi-Level category

This is the 14th year of the Annual Education Software Review Awards. The *ComputED Gazette* and Computer Learning Lab, San Diego's leading computer education resource, sponsor the awards program. Targeting innovative and content-rich programs and Web sites that provide parents and teachers with the technology to foster educational excellence, the program selects winners from titles submitted by digital resource publishers from around the world.

For more information about the *In2Books* program, visit [www.in2books.com](http://www.in2books.com). For more information about the ePals Global Community, visit [www.epals.com](http://www.epals.com).

#### **About ePals, Inc.**

ePals, Inc., offers students and educators around the world a safe environment for building and exchanging knowledge through protected connectivity tools, evidence-based curricula and authentic, collaborative learning experiences. The ePals Global Learning Community™ ([www.epals.com](http://www.epals.com)) is the largest online community of K-12 learners, enabling more than half a million educators and millions of students across 200 countries and territories to safely connect, exchange ideas and work together. The global community and a host of partner products are built on the ePals Distributed Learning Platform™, an online collaborative environment optimized for the education market. The company's mission is to support lifelong learning through collaborative experiences that empower and inspire. ePals is especially committed to enabling academically rigorous educational opportunities in economically disadvantaged environments through the ePals Foundation – provider of In2Books, the company's flagship literacy e-mentoring program. For more information, visit [www.epals.com](http://www.epals.com).

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