

## NEWS RELEASE



For more information contact  
Rebecca Kilduff  
ePals, Inc.  
(703) 885-3400  
rKilduff@corp.epals.com

For immediate release  
Sandy Fash  
C. Blohm & Associates, Inc.  
(608) 839-9804  
sandy@cblohm.com

### **ePals Names Dr. Rita Oates as Vice President of Education**

#### **Dr. Kari Stubbs to Serve as Director of Professional Development**

HERNDON, VA. (May 8, 2007) – ePals, Inc., creator of the first global K-12 collaborative learning community, has added two highly regarded education industry professionals to its team, Dr. Rita Oates and Dr. Kari Stubbs.

“Both Dr. Oates and Dr. Stubbs bring something very special to our team,” said Ed Fish, President & CEO of ePals. “We look forward to working with them as their experiences and skills will help to further provide teachers, students and parents with the tools they need to increase achievement through collaborative learning and literacy building environments.”

Dr. Oates and Dr. Stubbs are joining a well-respected education group that includes: Nina Zolt, Founder and Chief Program Architect; Dr. Tony Bryk, Chief Academic Officer; and Academic Advisers, Dr. Linda Gambrell and Dr. William Teale, among others.

“We are delighted to have educators of the caliber of Dr. Oates and Dr. Stubbs join us,” said Zolt. “Their expertise in online learning and professional development are invaluable as we continue to build more and more sophisticated collaborative learning environments.”

As Vice President of Education, Dr. Oates will ensure that ePals’ curricular products and services are research-based. She also will have direct responsibility for the oversight of the continuing efficacy of ePals products and services for the K-12 market. Additionally, Dr. Oates will play an active role in working directly with ePals customers and schools to ensure the company is meeting the needs of students and educators nationwide.

Dr. Oates has more than 30 years of experience working in the intersection of education and technology. For more than a dozen years, she worked as a consultant to organizations such as Microsoft, Scholastic, AOL, BBN, CELT Corp., and the U.S. Postal Service. Earlier, Dr. Oates directed preK-adult computer education and technology for Miami-Dade County Public Schools for seven years. While there, she led co-development of two products with commercial publishers: *Steps to English Language Learning* with Jostens Learning Corp. and *Choosing Success* with CCC for at-risk students.

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A published author of 10 books, a monthly columnist for *Kids and Computers*, and a frequent presenter on technology in the education space, she is the founding editor of *Internet Strategies for Education Markets*, a Heller Report. She also served as education editor of VIEWTRON, the first U.S. online service with color and graphics. Dr. Oates began her career as a language arts and journalism teacher in Kansas. Her doctoral degree from Indiana University focused on educational applications of print, video and computer-based media.

Working with Dr. Oates, Dr. Kari Stubbs will serve as Director of Professional Development, where she will provide overall curricular and pedagogic leadership to the design and implementation of the company's professional development for adults, which includes teachers, pen pal participants and families.

Most recently, Dr. Stubbs worked as the senior project coordinator of Technology Rich Classrooms, the Title IID initiative in Kansas, through her work with the Advanced Learning Technologies in Education Consortium (ALTEC). A Levels of Technology Implementation (LoTi) certified national trainer, Dr. Stubbs has presented at many national conferences and was recently honored by the National School Boards Association as one of the 20 most outstanding emerging leaders in education technology as part of the "20 to Watch" Award. In addition, she worked for Kansas City Public Television, where she developed and promoted strategies for the integration of streaming video resources into teaching and learning.

Dr. Stubbs began her career as an elementary school teacher in Plano, Texas, and spent much of her career in Blue Valley, a leading district in technology initiatives south of Kansas City. She earned her doctorate in curriculum and instruction from the University of Kansas.

For more information about ePals, visit [www.epals.com](http://www.epals.com) or call 1-888-770-3333.

### **About ePals**

ePals is the first global K-12 collaborative learning community, focused specifically on fostering reading, writing and critical thinking skills across the curriculum. The company's mission is to support lifelong learning through resource-rich, collaborative experiences. Over the past decade, ePals services, such as the research-proven *In2Books* literacy program, and the *SchoolM@il* and *SchoolBlog* suite of safe collaborative tools, have been widely used and trusted by schools, teachers, students, and families. The ePals community ([www.ePals.com](http://www.ePals.com)) connects teacher-supervised classroom-to-classroom pen pal exchanges and cross-cultural learning projects in more than 120,000 classrooms across 191 countries, connecting more than 7 million students and teachers.

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**Editor's Note:** Visit ePals at booth #1749 at the International Reading Association (IRA) Annual Convention in Toronto, Canada, May 13-17, 2007.