



Virginia Teacher Leaders Receive Professional Development from PBS TeacherLine and WHRO to Improve Technology Integration Statewide

Stimulus funds awarded to WHRO to provide PBS TeacherLine ISTE Capstone Certificate program and Peer Connection to ITRTs and media specialists throughout the state

ARLINGTON, Va. (May 3, 2010) – Incorporating technology into instruction helps students master academic standards and develop the skills necessary for success in the digital age. [WHRO](#), PBS member station in Norfolk, Va., has been awarded an Enhancing Education Through Technology grant under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to provide PBS TeacherLine® online professional development services to help educators in the state infuse technology effectively into their daily instructional practices. PBS TeacherLine (www.pbs.org/teacherline) is the premier provider of online professional development for preK-12 educators.

Through the grant, WHRO and PBS TeacherLine are providing the [PBS TeacherLine ISTE Capstone Certificate Program](#) to as many as 200 Instructional Technology Resource Teachers (ITRTs) and library media specialists in the state. The educators can enroll in the program at no charge, and if desired, earn graduate credit for program completion. The *PBS TeacherLine ISTE Capstone Certificate Program* is a series of research-based courses that focus on instructional technology use, and enable teachers to demonstrate their mastery of the ISTE National Educational Technology Standards (NETS-T). Program participants develop a professional digital portfolio of their work, earn credits toward salary and career advancement, and receive a joint certificate from ISTE and PBS TeacherLine documenting their proficiency in technology integration. The online graduate-level courses are facilitated by a master teacher and supported by a collaborative learning community. WHRO plans to have educators enrolled in the program by spring 2011.

More than 250 ITRTs have completed the *PBS TeacherLine ISTE Capstone Certificate Program* previously with successful learning outcomes. “The *PBS TeacherLine Capstone Certificate Program* is one of the best professional development programs I have had in my career as a teacher,” said Anita Harris, instructional technology specialist for Sussex County Public Schools. “By far the best experience I have had in the courses has been the use of the discussion boards. I have gleaned so much knowledge from these discussions as well as tons of resources that I can share with others.”

In addition, ITRTs and media specialists statewide – approximately 1,300 educators – will receive free access to PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection for continued support and training to promote 21st century learning in the classroom. Peer Connection, which recently earned the highest quality rating from the federal Government Performance and Results Act review, is an online suite of instructional strategies and tools for teacher leaders and instructional coaches who provide sustained, job-embedded professional development for their peers. Featuring thousands of research-based, standards-aligned resources in preK-12 math, reading, instructional strategies, and instructional technology, Peer Connection enables ITRTs and media specialists to create customized, practical learning experiences and guide teachers in their professional growth.

“Technology is changing at a rapid pace. Teachers need ongoing support to gain the confidence and knowledge needed to incorporate new technologies into instruction through research-based practices,” said Brian Callahan, chief education officer for WHRO, which administers PBS

TeacherLine services locally to Virginia educators. “We’re very thankful for the educational technology leadership our schools have shown over the years, and for the Department of Education’s recognition and support of the collective work of WHRO, our schools, and PBS TeacherLine.”

Old Dominion University professors Richard Overbaugh and Ruiling Lu conducted a study on the effectiveness of PBS TeacherLine’s online courses, including the *ISTE Capstone Certificate Program*, in Virginia. Published in the Fall 2008 issue of the *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, the study showed that the courses helped teachers increase their competence and confidence in using technology to enhance teaching and learning, as well as improve their operational knowledge of state and national technology and content area standards.

The Virginia Department of Education established the ITRT program to ensure the state’s investment in technology and network infrastructure in schools results in improved student learning. ITRTs help teachers integrate technology in the classroom effectively. Research commissioned by the Department indicates the ITRT program is achieving the state’s objectives.

To learn more about PBS TeacherLine, go to www.pbs.org/teacherline. Watch a video of ITRT Denise Luc as she explains what she learned in the PBS TeacherLine ISTE Capstone Certificate Program: <http://wmstreaming.whro.org/schooltalk/capstone.asf>.

About WHRO

WHRO is a public service media company that promotes education, culture and citizenship to the citizens of Hampton Roads, Virginia through a variety of telecommunications services. Thousands of viewers and listeners tune in to broadcast programming on WHRO’s four public television and seven public radio stations every day. Since its founding in 1961 to support education, WHRO has employed creativity and technology to serve its mission to enrich audiences through content that engages, educates and entertains. Owned by 18 local school divisions, WHRO delivers educational and new media services to 286,000 students and 25,000 educators per month as well.

About PBS TeacherLine

PBS TeacherLine is committed to helping teachers acquire the skills they need to prepare students for a successful future. PBS TeacherLine provides high-quality, affordable professional development for preK-12 educators through facilitated online courses, collaborative learning communities, and exemplary Web-based resources. More than 130 courses across multiple subject areas are offered. Teachers can earn continuing education units, professional development points, and graduate credits for course completion. The courses have been developed in conjunction with leading education organizations, including the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning, Concord Consortium, and International Society for Technology in Education. Created in 2000, PBS TeacherLine is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, which represents approximately 85 percent of the total program funding. The remaining 15 percent is funded through in-kind support from PBS and program income. To learn more, visit www.pbs.org/teacherline.

About PBS

PBS, with its 356 member stations, offers all Americans – from every walk of life – the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and online content. Each month, PBS reaches more than 124 million people on-air and online, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature and public affairs; hear diverse viewpoints; and take front row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS’ broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry’s most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. PBS’ premier children’s TV programming and Web site, pbskids.org, are parents’ and teachers’ most trusted partners in inspiring and nurturing curiosity and love of learning in children. More information is available at www.pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org Web sites on the Internet.

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Media contacts:

- Donovan Goode, PBS TeacherLine, 703-739-5252, dwgoode@pbs.org
- Kristen Plemon, C. Blohm & Associates, Inc., 608-839-9805, kristen@cblohm.com

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