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U.S. Department of Education and State Officials Attend Launch of Nation's Most Comprehensive Bilingual Digital Literacy Program

PR Newswire

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 10, 2011

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 10, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Officials from the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics and the State of California today joined Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and impreMedia publisher Monica Lozano to participate in the launch of Club Digital, the nation's most comprehensive bilingual Internet training program. Designed to close the Digital Divide, which disproportionately affects Hispanic families in America, Club Digital offers 30 days of bilingual, interactive lessons about all aspects of the Internet that will run throughout the month of August in impreMedia publications, including La Opinion, La Opinion Contigo and El Mensajero. The lessons are also available anytime at www.laopinion.com/clubdigital and more than 200,000 lesson supplements will be distributed free of charge by community organizations throughout California. Club Digital has been made possible through a public-private collaboration involving impreMedia, the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), AT&T and the Dewey Square Group.

In early 2012, Club Digital will expand nationally to reach more than 9.4 million Hispanics. "Club Digital is an innovative and critical community initiative that will improve educational opportunities for millions," said Juan Sepulveda, Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. "Accessing the Internet is one of the best ways we know to improve the academic achievement of Hispanic Americans."

California officials share the Obama administration's goal of improving Internet access, especially for low-income students and their families. "Preparing all students for success demands we ensure no child is left offline--at home or at school," said Tom Torlakson, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction. "Club Digital helps students as well as parents gain Internet skills that boost classroom learning, knowledge and workplace readiness."

Through its innovative and interactive bilingual lessons, Club Digital will educate users about the many economic, educational and social benefits of accessing the Internet. "Going online is no longer a luxury," said Monica Lozano, Publisher and Chief Executive Officer of impreMedia, and founder of Club Digital. "The Internet is now the essential tool of modern life, the gateway to jobs, education, government, financial and healthcare services, and much more."

Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa was among the federal, state and private sector dignitaries who toured the Magnolia Place Family Center in Los Angeles, one of the many community organizations around the state hosting Club Digital lessons. "It's inspiring to see people learning firsthand what the Internet means for their lives and for their families," said Villaraigosa. "For many on the wrong side of the Digital Divide, this is an opportunity for access they never thought they would have."

Club Digital users were also able to visit an onsite mobile computer lab provided by the Southeast Community Development Corporation, which will travel around the Los Angeles area, inviting users to try Club Digital. "Easy access is the key," said Sunne Wright McPeak, President and CEO of the California Emerging Technology Fund. "No one should feel anymore that the Internet is beyond their reach. Club Digital is designed to bring this critical learning and economic tool to the people who need and deserve it most."

Combining traditional media, online resources and community partnerships, Club Digital is an unprecedented public-private collaboration designed to serve as many Americans as possible.

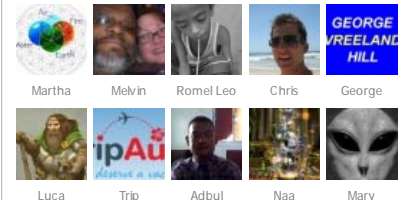
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bringing high-speed Internet access to as many people and communities as possible," said Ken McNeely, President, AT&T California. "The Club Digital training program is an excellent resource – providing new opportunities and new skills to users at no charge."

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Club Digital's California pilot program runs August 1-30 and lessons will remain accessible at www.lapinion.com/clubdigital. The program launches nationally in January, 2012.

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