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Local Technology Business Owner Receives National Outstanding Service Award

Houston, Texas -- www.COMPUTEREXPLORERS.com (CE), an international company dedicated to children's technology education, recently named Dawn Whalen of New Hartford, CT the "February Franchisee Highlight." Whalen one of nearly 100 CE business owners in the US and abroad, has been a CE owner for over three years. Coming on the heels of being named "December Franchisee of the Month", Whalen's recognition proves her dedication to technology education is helping to make strides for COMPUTER EXPLORERS.

"Whalen is an integral part of our educational technology program," said Deb Evans, President and CEO of COMPUTER EXPLORERS. *"She makes a difference every week in her community by facilitating developmentally-appropriate children's computer technology learning experiences and by helping schools to integrate technology effectively. She is an active contributor during our monthly franchisee meetings and always willing to share her experiences with others in COMPUTER EXPLORERS"*.

Whalen has been delivering instruction via uniquely trained technology teachers in preschools, elementary schools and community sites in Hartford County since 2005. "I believe that computers and technology peripherals should be used as learning tools," said Whalen. "Technology skills are fundamental in ensuring children's future success; the employment of active discovery learning in the COMPUTER EXPLORERS program is an exciting way to build enthusiasm for using technology in creative ways." "I cannot imagine a more outstanding representative of COMPUTER EXPLORERS within our system!" concludes Evans.

A former computer training professional with over 10 years experience in technology training, human resources, curriculum design and business management, Whalen has a B.S. degree in Health Care Administration from Quinnipiac University and a M.A. degree in Education and Human Development from The George Washington University. Founded

on her desire to build a future for her family in Connecticut, Dawn Whalen's passion for education and love of technology prompted her to purchase the COMPUTER EXPLORERS franchise in May 2005. This month's franchisee highlight is an active member of her community serving on the board for the New Hartford Business Council, helping in New Hartford school classrooms, and volunteering her time with the New Hartford Women's Club. In speaking with Dawn, we learned about her use of and dedication to emerging technologies, how she grows as a professional, and her experiences with COMPUTER EXPLORERS.

Q: Tell me a little bit about your blogs. What are they about and how do they tie in with COMPUTER EXPLORERS?

A: Right now, I use my blogs to post movies that students make in our programs. Then, I link the movies to our Web site. My goal for the future is to use the blogs as another communication tool driving potential clients to the COMPUTER EXPLORERS Web site and helping our franchise appear as the first result when Internet surfers search for technology education information.

Q: I heard you have a great blog and e-Newsletter distribution process. Can you tell us more about what you do?

A: I use the articles provided by COMPUTER EXPLORERS and turn them into my own e-Newsletter for my clients and prospects. I also take advantage of Constant Contact — it's a great tool. In each e-Newsletter, I feature a specific program we offer. A client even called me, specifically asking for the Around the World program after seeing it features in the e-Newsletter. I also put a video clip explaining our programs on YouTube and copy the link in the e-Newsletter, adding technology and fun to the text.

Q: How do you work towards continuous learning and improvement as a teacher?

A: As a business owner, I've always needed to work a bit harder and ask a few more questions to be sure I understand what my clients need. With the wealth of information available through COMPUTER EXPLORERS, I take advantage of the articles of interest that are posted on our internal Web board. I also participate in as many webinars and other educational opportunities offered, all through my home office. Most importantly, I do a lot of listening — to other owners with education backgrounds and to my teachers. They are my resources who teach every day and understand our students best.

Q: How do COMPUTER EXPLORERS classes increase student interest in computers and technology?

A. I think it's a matter of finding the program that "clicks" for a child. Whether it's a robotics class allowing students to experience hands-on programming or a movie-making class offering the opportunity to express artistic and creative talents, when children find what works for them through our classes, it sparks an interest in technology that lasts forever.

Q: What's your favorite story about a student in one of your COMPUTER EXPLORERS classes?

A. My favorite story happened this past Christmas Eve when I substituted for one of my teachers at a childcare center. Located in the same building, the Department of Transportation held a holiday party, complete with a visit from Santa for all their employees' children. When I arrived, one of my 3-year-old students insisted she participate in her COMPUTERTOTS class before leaving to see Santa. When CT the COMPUTER EXPLORERS green turtle upstages Santa – that says something!

About COMPUTER EXPLORERS

COMPUTER EXPLORERS provides educational technology classes to benefit children and staff at childcare centers, preschools, private and public elementary schools and community sites worldwide. Founded and managed by educators, the company has created hundreds of technology lesson plans and instructional tools since 1983. The company is an active member of the ISTE 100, the International Society of Technology in Education www.iste.org, and sponsor of Little Clickers, a publication of Children's Technology Review www.childrensoftware.com.

The COMPUTER EXPLORERS early childhood program provides computer classes for children ages 3-5, foreign language and cultural exploration, and reinforcement of reading, math, science and social studies beginning skills.

The COMPUTER EXPLORERS school age program offers a turn-key technology program for public and private schools, as well as after school and summer camp programs teaching robotics, engineering, digital movie-making and video game design.

In addition to domestic classes, the company offers courses through its business owners in the United Kingdom, Malaysia and Australia.

Go to www.computerexplorers.com for further information.

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