

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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## **The Verizon Foundation to Invest \$1.2 Million in Grants to Provide Training and Innovative, Free Online Resources Through Thinkfinity.org to Teachers in 17 States**

*Foundation Also Honors U.S. Rep Bart Gordon With First 'Innovation in Education Award'*

WASHINGTON - The Verizon Foundation will provide \$1.2 million in grants to educational organizations in 17 states to raise awareness of the free educational resources available on Thinkfinity.org and to train teachers to use the comprehensive, Web-based program.

[Thinkfinity.org](http://Thinkfinity.org) is the Verizon Foundation's free online portal to 55,000 educational resources, including standards-based, grade-specific, K-12 lesson plans and other student interactive tools and materials for students provided in partnership with many of the nation's leading educational and literacy organizations.

"Through these innovative partnerships, teachers in 17 states will receive free access to specialized training on educational resources tailored to meet their specific state standards," said

Verizon Foundation President Patrick Gaston in announcing the \$1.2 million commitment Wednesday (Nov. 14) at a gathering at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Also at the event, held in celebration of American Education Week, the foundation awarded its first Innovation in Education Award to U.S. Rep. Bart Gordon of Tennessee for his ongoing commitment to education.

Gordon, a longtime teacher advocate, recently sponsored the America Competes Act, which is designed to ensure that U.S. students, teachers, businesses and workers are prepared to continue to lead the world in innovation, research and technology.

The bill, which was signed into law by President Bush in August, aims to improve math and science education and foster energy research.

"Half the world's workers earn less than \$2 per day. We cannot and should not try to compete with the world on wages -- the way we can compete is with a highly-skilled, more productive workforce," said Gordon, chairman of the House Committee on Science and Technology. "That's why I authored the America Competes Act in Congress to improve math and science education so our kids and grandkids will be able to compete with the rest of the world for the jobs of the future. I thank the Verizon Foundation for this honor and for their work on outstanding educational tools like Thinkfinity."

The foundation grants announced Wednesday will be used to:

- Provide comprehensive Thinkfinity.org training for teachers through statewide partners such as the department of education.
- Raise awareness among educators of Thinkfinity.org resources.

- Provide educators and students with Thinkfinity.org resources aligned to state standards. The resources will be available via a special educator-resource portal on the Thinkfinity Web site.

The grants will be awarded over the next few months to educational organizations in the following states: Alabama, California, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

[Thinkfinity.org](http://Thinkfinity.org) offers elementary through high school teachers resources across eight academic disciplines, from science to English to mathematics, to improve student achievement. Thinkfinity.org is designed to help teachers gain access to online resources quickly and requires no passwords or software downloads.

In addition to providing standards-based resources from the nation's leading educational and literacy organizations, Thinkfinity.org also offers a free, robust professional development program for teachers and trainers.

Content for Thinkfinity is provided through a partnership between the Verizon Foundation and 11 of the nation's leading organizations in the fields of education and literacy: the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the International Reading Association, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, National Center for Family Literacy, National Council on Economic Education, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Council of Teachers of English, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Geographic Society, ProLiteracy Worldwide and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

The Verizon Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Verizon Communications, is committed to improving literacy and K-12 education through its signature program Thinkfinity.org; fostering awareness and prevention of domestic violence; and promoting the use of technology in health-care delivery. In 2006, the foundation awarded more than \$69 million in grants to nonprofit agencies in the United States and abroad. The foundation also matched charitable donations from Verizon employees and retirees, resulting in \$29 million in combined contributions. Under the foundation's Verizon Volunteer initiative, one of the nation's largest employee-volunteer programs, company employees and retirees have also contributed nearly 3 million hours of community service since Verizon's inception in 2000.

For more information on the foundation, visit [www.verizon.com/foundation](http://www.verizon.com/foundation).

Verizon Communications Inc. (NYSE:VZ), headquartered in New York, is a leader in delivering broadband and other wireline and wireless communication innovations to mass market, business, government and wholesale customers. Verizon Wireless operates America's most reliable wireless network, serving 63.7 million customers nationwide. Verizon's Wireline operations include Verizon Business, which delivers innovative and seamless business solutions to customers around the world, and Verizon Telecom, which brings customers the benefits of converged communications, information and entertainment services over the nation's most advanced fiber-optic network. A Dow 30 company, Verizon has a diverse workforce of nearly 238,000 and last year generated consolidated operating revenues of more than \$88 billion. For more information, visit [www.verizon.com](http://www.verizon.com).

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