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Contact: Arlyne Alston  
(614) 485-6030  
arlyne.alston@etech.ohio.gov

**Ohio Connects Education with Technology at the  
2009 eTech Ohio Educational Technology Conference**

(Columbus, Ohio) – The 2009 eTech Ohio Educational Technology Conference attracted a huge crowd at Ohio's premiere professional development event this week. Among the largest educational technology conferences in the nation, the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Educational Technology Conference welcomed more than 6,000 participants at the Greater Columbus Convention Center February 2-4. This year's Conference hosted 450 sessions and displays and more than 200 vendors.

"Ohio has historically been an innovator in the use of technology to advance higher education," said Eric Fingerhut, eTech Ohio Commission Chair. "Today, it is even more imperative that Ohio continues to be a technological leader that drives the economy. To do this, we must continue to collaborate in order to create a single, integrated technological infrastructure that will support a true P-20 system of education. This three-day Conference provides an excellent opportunity for us to come together to find ways to leverage our resources to create additional opportunities for all Ohioans."

Deborah Delisle, Superintendent of Public Instruction, addressed Conference attendees along with keynote speakers including Wesley Fryer, Daniel Burrus and Jeff Salz. Featured speakers included Richard Baranuik, C. Allen Shaffer and Kelly Fonner.

"eTech Ohio planned many engaging events and activities that showcase the hard work and dedication of many talented educators from Ohio and beyond," said David Barber, eTech Ohio Interim Executive Director. "This year's Conference featured sessions and displays covering topics such as Classroom Integration; Distance learning including eLearning; Emerging Technologies; Leadership and Planning; Technology Infrastructure; Planning and Support; and Staff Development."

eTech Ohio launched Ohio on iTunes U in the pavilion where thousands of attendees discovered hundreds of podcasts showcasing a wide variety of educational content from across the state. Ohio on iTunes U provides educational digital media resources through a popular national digital media provider, Apple iTunes U, free of charge with unlimited access. The Apple iTunes U platform allows the State of Ohio to showcase educational resources, professional development materials, best practices, and student samples which have been produced by members of higher education, the K-12 community, and a variety of Ohio content providers.

The S.T.E.M. Challenge also debuted at this year's Conference affording 11 teams from around the state to compete in a robotics challenge in the Technology for Learning Center. Students

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built and demonstrated their science, technology, engineering and mathematic projects throughout the Conference and winners were announced during an awards ceremony following the three-day competition. Participating schools included: Afrocentric High School, Fort Recovery High School, Highland High School, Mansfield Senior High School, Montpelier High School, New Albany High School, North Adams High School, Parkway High School, River Valley High School, and Tri-Rivers Career Center. The 2009 S.T.E.M. Challenge Award winner was Highland High School.

eTech Ohio's Educator Awards honored the achievements and accomplishments in support of learning and student achievement through the use of educational technology in Ohio PK-12 education. Jeff VanArnhem of Olmsted Falls City Schools was named the Technology Teacher of the Year, Wayne Babcanec of the Norwalk City School District was named the Technology Administrator of the Year and Mary Ann Guidos of Orange City Schools was named the Technology Specialist of the Year.

Former Congressman Ralph Regula was honored as the 2009 Robert R. Cupp Legislative Award winner for his work in advancing Ohio's position as a leader in the integration of technology in the classroom. Mr. Regula represented Ohio's 16<sup>th</sup> Congressional district including Stark, Wayne and portions of Ashland and Medina counties in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1973 until 2009 for 18 consecutive terms.

The Student Video Contest recognized outstanding Ohio student achievement in the use of video production technologies while meeting Ohio academic content standards and other instructional objectives. Students in grades 6-12 submitted their video productions to their local public television station where they competed against other submissions from their area. Regional winners advanced to compete in a statewide competition last December. State finalists and their sponsoring teacher were invited to participate in the eTech Ohio Educational Technology Conference. State finalists and the Videos of the Year were honored during an awards ceremony on Wednesday.

“As powerful video production equipment and software continues to become readily available, teachers across Ohio are utilizing video production as an effective instructional tool,” Barber said. “Video production uniquely empowers students to use their creative and critical talents to bring a vision to life.”

This year's Conference Documentary Team from WOUB's Center for Public Media was charged with creating five to seven minute onsite documentary that captured the essence of the three day Conference. Several students from Ohio University captured footage during Conference sessions and activities and conducted several interviews with attendees, presenters and guests. The documentary premiered during the Conference and will be available on eTech Ohio's website.

### **About eTech Ohio**

eTech Ohio is a national leader in educational technology access and integration. eTech Ohio has made a commitment to serve Ohio citizens through educational initiatives and putting new technology to use for affiliates so that Ohio's learners will succeed in the schools of today and the world of tomorrow. Visit [www.etech.ohio.gov](http://www.etech.ohio.gov) for more information about eTech Ohio.