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# MARYLAND EDUCATORS RECEIVE TOP EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AWARDS

## *MICCA AWARDS PLACE SPOTLIGHT ON INNOVATION*

**BALTIMORE (June 3, 2009)** – Two Maryland educators received the top honors at the recent state educational technology conference known as MICCA. Kathy Benson, a technology integration teacher at Vincent Farm Elementary School in Baltimore County, was honored for her work in the classroom and Geordie Paulus, a secondary technology teacher, was cited for her leadership in the field.

Ms. Benson received the MICCA 2009 Outstanding Educator Using Technology Award. She met the challenges and opportunities of opening a new 21<sup>st</sup> century school with dedication, hard work, and gusto. In the process, she tenaciously advocated for approaches that were in the best interests of children. She was passionate in her belief that technology is a means to facilitate student achievement rather than an end in itself.

Working with faculty to increase capacity in integrating technology to enhance teaching and learning, Ms. Benson also provided informal coaching of teachers throughout the week, Ms. Benson conducted numerous workshops and provided several professional development opportunities for the school district. She also is an experienced presenter at MICCA conferences and has taught courses at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

Geordie Paulus, a pioneer as the first Technology Support teacher at the middle level in Howard County, was the recipient of the MICCA 2009 Outstanding Technology Leader Award. In this recently piloted position at Elkridge Landing Middle School, she was responsible for creating and facilitating professional development activities to increase the use of technology by teachers and students; collaborating with leaders within the school to create a comprehensive technology plan that maximizes the use of the hardware and software provided by the local school system; and modeling the integration of technology into all aspects of the school's culture to increase student engagement and staff productivity.

Ms. Paulus's passion for technology extends beyond the classroom to the entire community. She developed and implemented various technology related programs for students in the school and hosted evening parent programs to ensure that technology was



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being used effectively and safely at home. Testifying before the Howard County Council, she advocated for technology resources to support the expansion of Technology Support Teachers to all middle schools.

Also honored at this year's MICCA conference was Bettina Grahek, PhD Student with Ed Leadership, Higher Ed, and International Ed Policy at University of Maryland, College Park, for Best Research Paper. Her submission was entitled *Universal Design for Learning: An Example of Punctuate Equilibrium*. This paper examined the legislative process through which Universal Design for Learning was incorporated into the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) 2004 legislative language from the perspective of punctuated-equilibrium.

Kalani Smith, Manager of the Maryland Student Technology Literacy Consortium, a competitive partnership grant funded by the Maryland State Department of Education through a federal Title II-D *Enhancing Education through Technology* grant, received the coveted "Making It Happen" jacket for his contributions to the successful integration of technology in education in K-12 schools. Smith deserved this award because of his successful leadership in guiding representatives of all 24 Maryland school districts in identifying what Maryland students should know and be able to do with technology and by developing the state standards for student technology literacy in collaboration with MSDE. The International Society for Technology in Education's (ISTE) Making It Happen program was created in 1995 and is an internationally recognized awards program for educators in the field of educational technology integration in K-12 schools. The program identifies and rewards educational technology leaders around the world for their commitment and innovation.

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