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Connections Academy Teacher Wins 2010 Excellence in Distance Learning Teaching Award

***-- Commonwealth Connections Academy's Janae Cardel Honored for Creativity,
Innovation in Distance Learning --***

Harrisburg, PA (May 5, 2010) – Janae Cardel, a teacher at the virtual charter school Commonwealth Connections Academy (CCA), yesterday was awarded with a 2010 Excellence in Distance Learning Teaching Gold Award. The international award was granted by the United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) at its ceremony in St. Louis, Missouri.

Cardel, who has been teaching for CCA in Harrisburg for 6 years, won the award for her creative and inventive approach to virtual instruction of first graders. Combining sound curriculum objectives with a creative approach, Cardel often uses puppets and songs during her interactive "Livelessons" to keep her young students engaged and to encourage participation.

"It feels great to know that even as a distance learning teacher, I am able to reach my students on an individual and personal level," said Cardel. "I am so honored, and humbled, to be receiving this award from USDLA."

She explained that through her "LiveLessons," students can speak with her and other students, write letters and numbers on the screen, interact with virtual flash cards and pens, and answer questions online and through a chat function.

"We are so proud of Janae's accomplishment," said CEO of Commonwealth Connections Academy Dennis Tulli. "Janae's innovative style not only teaches the fundamentals of each subject, but also encourages her students to think creatively."

President and CEO of Connection's Academy Barbara Dreyer yesterday was also honored with a USDLA award for "Outstanding Leadership by an Individual in the Field of Distance Learning."

Presented annually to individuals and organizations engaged in the development and delivery of distance learning programs, the USDLA awards recognize major accomplishments in distance learning. They highlight the instructors, programs and professionals who have achieved and demonstrated extraordinary results through the use of online, videoconferencing, satellite and blended learning delivery technology.

About Commonwealth Connections Academy

Commonwealth Connections Academy combines the expertise and accountability of public education, with strong parental and the flexibility of technology-enhanced learning. Because it is a Pennsylvania public school, there are no costs for tuition, fees or supply costs. CCA serves Pennsylvania students in grades K-12. For more information, please visit www.connectionsacademy.com/cca.