



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COLORADO CONNECTIONS ACADEMY TEACHER NAMED ONLINE TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Colorado Department of Education Recognizes Chaille Cummings with Distinguished Award in Elementary Education

Englewood, Colo., August 5, 2008 – Chaille Cummings, a kindergarten and first grade teacher with Colorado Connections Academy virtual public school, was honored today with the first-ever award for Online Elementary Teacher of the Year by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The award was presented by the Commissioner of Education, Dwight Jones, at the OL TEACH 2008 Conference in Colorado Springs.

“It is an honor to be selected from such an outstanding group of teachers for this award,” said Cummings. “Not only is it rewarding to receive this level of recognition for my work, but for the CDE to create this award demonstrates the state’s commitment to online education. To be the first teacher recognized as Online Elementary Teacher of the Year feels like I am helping blaze a path for a future where virtual schooling is more widely recognized as an integral part of our education system.”

Cummings was selected by a panel in the online teaching division of CDE. On her application, Cummings said, "The moment I sat down and began working with my first student online, I knew I was in the right place." She further states that she enjoys the fact that each and every child in her class can have her undivided attention for as long as they need her. She knows her students so much better in the online environment, giving her the ability to provide the children the instruction and interventions they need. Students choose a virtual school for a variety of reasons. In the virtual environment there is more time – whether it's a gifted child who needs a more challenging experience, another requiring additional assistance, or a student who needs a more flexible schedule. These children are getting the best one on one instruction to meet their individual needs.

Cummings has been working at Connections Academy for over three years after having taught for four years in the brick and mortar classroom. Her experience is predominately with the primary grades. Cummings focuses many of her lessons on early reading instruction and interventions using synchronous and asynchronous lessons. She has her B.S. in Elementary Education with a Kindergarten Licensure from Minnesota State University Moorhead and is currently working on her Masters in Administration. Chaille is the Master Teacher and trainer for Colorado Connections Academy.

**For more information on Colorado Connections Academy,
visit <http://www.connectionsacademy.com/coloca>.**

About Connections Academy

Connections Academy is a leading national provider of high quality, highly accountable virtual public schools in thirteen states operated in partnership with charter schools, school districts, and state departments of education. Connections Academy schools deliver top-quality, personalized education for students that combines certified teachers, a proven curriculum, technology tools, and community experiences to create a supportive and successful environment for children who want an individualized approach to education. In Connections Academy's unique Personalized Performance Learning® approach, students use daily lesson plans and curriculum materials provided by Connections Academy. Teachers develop a learning plan for each student, whose progress is tracked through a proprietary, web-based Learning Management System. In 2008-09 Connections Academy will serve students in Arizona, California (Southern and Central), Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Minnesota, Missouri (through the Missouri Virtual Instruction Program), Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Wisconsin. In 2008-09 Connections Academy will offer grades K through 12, though some schools do not offer all grades. For more information, call 800-382-6010 or visit www.ConnectionsAcademy.com.

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