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Contact: Lee Ann Mayo
601-359-2777

GOVERNOR MUSGROVE MISSISSIPPI FIRST IN NATION INTERNET-ACCESSIBLE COMPUTERS IN CLASSROOM

(Jackson, MS) – Today, Governor Ronnie Musgrove celebrated the completion of providing an Internet-accessible computer to every public school classroom in Mississippi at an event at the Governor’s Mansion. Joining the Governor at the event were many educational leaders, teachers, technology coordinators, and supporters of the initiative, including Bob Pittman, Jim Barksdale, Robin Costa, Blake Wilson, Dr. Lavon Reed, and Dave Boliek.

“We are the national leader when it comes to bringing technology into the classroom,” Musgrove said. “Even in tough economic times, we are sending the signal loud and clear that Mississippi puts our children and their future first by investing in education and providing the technology our children need to excel. Now, any child and teacher in Mississippi public schools has every resource at their fingertips.”

“We applaud Governor Musgrove for his leadership on the Computers in the Classrooms Initiative,” said John Thomasian, director of the National Governors Association’s Center for Best Practices. “His vision for integrating technology into student learning serves as a national model, and a unique one today.”

With this initiative, 32,354 public classrooms have an Internet-accessible computer. The State Department of Education has independently verified this accomplishment with each school district. The initiative was funded by a large public/private partnership.

Through the Mississippi Development Authority, Governor Musgrove worked with the non-profit organization ExplorNet to train over 39 teachers and 300 students who built over 5,952 computers for project.

(more)

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This Computers in the Classroom initiative was based on a 1999 challenge by Mr. Bob Pittman, native Mississippian and former CEO of America Online who said, "It's interesting that with only a small shift in resources, it would be possible for Mississippi to put an Internet-connected computer on every desk...What would that do for the students? What would that do for the teachers?"

On February 8, 2000, Governor Musgrove launched the Computers in the Classroom Initiative by declaring, "By the end of 2002, every Mississippi public classroom will have an Internet-accessible computer..."

"We will continue to fight to keep our school first and to focus on provide technology for our students," said Musgrove. "It's great when Mississippi leads the nation twice in one week. We will continue to make these strides in education which will provide better jobs for our people."

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