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LINDENWOOD

New Southwestern Bell MINTS classroom unveiled

Technology is becoming as common in classrooms today as chalk and erasers. Teachers and educational institutions must keep up with this ever-changing learning environment to prepare them with the knowledge and skills needed to use technology in the classroom. Thanks to a grant from the Southwestern Bell Foundation, the next generation of educators are off to a great start.

Today, the Southwestern Bell Foundation awarded a \$200,000 grant to Lindenwood University to fund new Multimedia Interactive Networked Technologies (MINTS) classrooms. The MINTS classrooms will employ advanced telecommunications technology to provide educators with hands-on training in the use of technology to teach traditional subjects. Classes begin this fall.

“We are grateful to Southwestern Bell for its generosity,” said Lindenwood President Dennis Spellmann. “This donation and these classrooms will benefit so many people—teachers and the young people the teachers will teach.”

“Technology can be a powerful tool in educating our youth,” said Jan Newton, president, Southwestern Bell-Missouri. “As a telecommunications industry leader, Southwestern Bell recognizes that today’s students and teachers need the skills and knowledge to work in a world where advanced technologies are the norm. Investments in education are investments in the future success of our business.”

Lindenwood University unveiled the new classrooms today with special guests that included Mike Lucas, director of teacher education for the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Terry Stewart, superintendent of the Jennings School District, the metropolitan area’s pioneer of MINTS education.

Southwestern Bell has contributed \$2.7 million to the MINTS program since 1997, which began as a pilot project through a cooperative effort of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Missouri Research Park and Education Network (MOREnet), Southwestern Bell, and 12 elementary classrooms in six St. Louis area school districts. Today, there are nearly 450 MINTS classrooms in Missouri.

Lindenwood University’s dean of education, Rick Boyle, said the MINTS classrooms would help make pre-service teachers more computer literate and show them how to effectively use technology in the classroom. Boyle said the technology would also be used for re-preparation of teachers who need to develop their understanding of how to effectively use technology in their classroom.

Boyle said Lindenwood pursued the establishment of a MINTS classroom at the University because of community feedback.

“We keep in close contact with our graduates and with local superintendents and we started getting surveys back indicating a need in this area,” said Boyle. “There are numerous schools throughout Missouri that are using technology in the classroom, but we are not aware of any other universities preparing teachers for this specific type of classroom.”

The Southwestern Bell Foundation is a member of the SBC Foundation, the charitable giving arm of SBC

Communications Inc. and its family of companies. In 2000, SBC, through Foundation and corporate giving, donated more than \$95 million to support efforts that enrich and strengthen diverse communities nationwide. The Foundation places primary emphasis on supporting programs that help increase access to information technologies; broaden technology training and professional skills development; and effectively integrate new technologies to enhance education and economic development -- especially for underserved populations.

Lindenwood University is nationally recognized for its pre-service and in-service education programs, and is the fastest growing higher education institution in Missouri. The university serves more than 80 percent of St. Charles County teachers who are pursuing additional training, and in the last five years, more than 700 teachers completed master's degrees through 16 extended sites across the state.

For more information on the MINTS program at Lindenwood University, call Dr. Boyle at (636)949-4477.

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