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Software Association of Oregon Foundation *Changes Name to TechStart Education Foundation to Reflect Broadening Foundation Activities*

*Growth and Development of Foundation Calls for New Brand Definition
Focused on Educational Outcomes*

Portland, Oregon, May 31, 2007 – Following several years of growth in the number of its programs and their impact on the education community in Oregon, the Software Association of Oregon Foundation (SAOF) today announced its new brand and image. As *TechStart Education Foundation* (TechStart), the organization will continue its original mission to awaken a passion for technology among Oregon students through programs for students and teachers that encourage, enable and support technology education opportunities.

TechStart's relationship to the Software Association of Oregon (SAO) will remain the same. The SAO Foundation was founded in 2003 by the SAO as a 501c3 philanthropic education foundation, and the foundation's board of directors will continue to be selected by the board of the SAO. TechStart, as a brand that will be more strongly identified with children and education, is intended to strengthen the foundation's ability to have a real and lasting impact on both. The two organizations will continue to work together to connect Oregon's technology industry with education, raising awareness, involving industry volunteers, and raising funds to support technology-related education in Oregon's K-12 schools.

Building on its core foundation of support from Oregon's software industry, TechStart will conduct broad outreach to seek volunteer involvement and financial support from any industry, government, and private sources that wish to invest in technology education. TechStart will also seek to build relationships with other nonprofit organizations with related goals and programs.

“As the organization has grown and built a substantial portfolio of programs to inspire kids with the creative and career-related opportunities that abound in technology, we found that we needed to build a stronger platform for communicating our unique mission and identity,” said Andrew Shakman, Board President of TechStart and CEO of LeanPath, Inc. “While initiated and championed by software business leaders via the SAO, it is important that our audiences readily grasp that the foundation’s purpose is to help kids and education, and is not just focused on industry-specific priorities.”

TechStart programs have included the annual *SuperQuest* professional development training for teachers in partnership with the Oregon Computer Science Teachers Association, NW LEGO in Education and ROBOLAB Regional Conference, Willamette University-SAO Programming Contest, subsidies for LEGO robotics teaching equipment in partnership with ETIC, and the Technology Educator of the Year recognition presented at the Uncork-ED wine tasting and charity gala. In 2007 the foundation is expanding existing programs and creating new ones, including an award competition for Student Technologist of the Year and scholarships for students to attend the SAO OIT Game Programming Camp in Klamath Falls.

“The TechStart board of directors, volunteers, sponsors and donors have done a spectacular job of building what is in essence a living example of the kind of entrepreneurship we are trying to expose our children to,” said Harvey Mathews, President of the SAO. “With the addition of a more evolved brand identity and coordinated marketing effort, the foundation is positioning itself for continued growth, and I’m sure it will make a big impact in years to come. The SAO and its members will continue to work very closely with TechStart to improve technology education in Oregon.”

The next phase for TechStart is the execution of a number of critical programs that peak in the summer months, in particular the *SuperQuest* series, which impacts thousands of students annually by helping their teachers build technology-related skills and curricula. Following that, the Uncork-ED annual wine-tasting fundraiser is scheduled for October 27, 2007 at the Portland Art Museum. Uncork-ED is expected to draw 400-500 attendees, including software industry executives and educators.

About TechStart and SAO

The TechStart Education Foundation (www.techstart.org) is a 501c3 non-profit that was founded in 2003 by the Software Association of Oregon (<http://www.sao.org>), a trade association

with more than 600 member organizations. TechStart strives to awaken a passion for technology among all Oregon students by helping to make technology-related educational opportunities available to them via a number of programs. For more information about TechStart, contact John Ossowski, Program and Advancement Manager, at 503-802-5211.

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