



Press Release

Contact:
Brenda Kempster

brenda@linkamericas.org
(760) 610-1719

NEW, FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND WEB AND MOBILE PLATFORM TO TEACH DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS

*LINK AMERICAS Foundation and REALPOLITECH announce the beta release
of TRAIL and JobScout with funding support from the California State Library*

PALO ALTO, CA, DECEMBER 7, 2011: The LINK AMERICAS Foundation and REALPOLITECH announced the online beta release of **TRAIL** (Technology Resources and Internet Learning), a game-based learning platform for teaching basic computer and Internet skills. **TRAIL** and the first application to be released on the platform, **JobScout**, were announced during a meeting of Silicon Valley business and non-profit leaders today in Palo Alto.

TRAIL uses social gaming and standards of the social web to create a safe and accessible entry point for users to engage in learning digital literacy skills. **TRAIL** was developed to address the needs of the more than 20% of people in the United States who lack the fundamental digital literacy skills they need to participate fully in our information economy.

The new **JobScout** application places the user in the role of a "scout" searching for digital literacy skills to find employment. It leads the user on an interactive journey through the key skills and processes of job hunting including fundamentals such as searching job sites, resume writing, submitting online applications and peer-to-peer networking (www.jobscout.caltrail.com).

JobScout, which supports the Basic Digital Literacy Skills Framework developed by the State of California, tracks the user's progress through a series of performance metrics including proficiency rankings and usage rates. Users receive positive reinforcement in the form of **JobScout** merit badges.

Initial funding for **JobScout** was provided by a grant from the California State Library. The project is being piloted in nearly 140 library branches in California, including a diversity of locations in the County of Los Angeles Public Library, the San Jose Public Library, the Santa Cruz Public Libraries and the Yolo County Library, during the first quarter of 2012. Access will also be provided to Get Connected! programs

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throughout the state. California State Library research shows that nearly 55% of Californians rely on libraries as their primary or only source of free online access. Last year, 18,846 computers in public libraries were used more than 38 million times.

"The State Library is dedicated to ensuring all Californians have the resources they need through their public libraries. As centers for learning in our communities, they are places where we can learn the new skills needed to be successful in the digital world," said Stacey Aldrich, California State Librarian. "JobScout is a great tool for teaching people the basic digital literacy they need for finding jobs in the digital era."

The official announcement of the slim beta release of **TRAIL** and **JobScout** was made during the third **iCALIFORNIA** Leadership Breakfast. The meeting was hosted by the Knight Foundation as part of the foundation's support for the **TRAIL** platform and the **iCALIFORNIA** campaign. Attending Silicon Valley businesses and organizations included Verizon, AT&T, IBM, Comcast, LinkedIn, Microsoft, Common Sense Media and the Silicon Valley Education Foundation.

"The Knight Foundation believes that expanding the benefits of digital technology to the entire community is vital to helping people become informed and engaged in their communities in the 21st century," said Judith Kleinberg, program director, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. "Digital and media literacy are now fundamental to civic and cultural growth, to increasing the ability of individuals to act in their own best interest, and to fostering a strong democracy."

The **iCALIFORNIA** Leadership Breakfasts are part of the pre-launch activities for the iCALIFORNIA Digital Literacy Campaign. **iCALIFORNIA** is a collaborative effort of government, private sector and community-based organizations that aims to promote and foster digital literacy and digital citizenship among all demographic segments in the state (www.linkamericas.org/icalifornia.html).

"Under the leadership of the California Technology Agency, California Emerging Technology Fund and LINK AMERICAS Foundation (LAF), **iCALIFORNIA** will raise awareness of the importance of digital literacy skills and build community engagement through innovative digital literacy and media literacy technologies," said Brenda Kempster, Executive Director of LAF, the designated non-profit organization managing the campaign.

"The California Emerging Technology Fund sponsored the California Executive Order to promote digital literacy and has underwritten the development of the iCALIFORNIA campaign because it is essential that all Californians have the knowledge and skills to use information technology in today's global economy," said Sunne Wright McPeak, President and CEO, California Emerging Technology Fund.

Planned outreach activities for **iCALIFORNIA** include statewide branding and messaging, local and regional conferences, award programs, contests, an online database of digital literacy programs and resources, research and polling and social media engagement. The official launch of **iCALIFORNIA** is scheduled for February 1, 2012, in Sacramento.

LINK AMERICAS Foundation (www.linkamericas.org/) fosters collaborative initiatives demonstrating the value of Technology Serving Humanity in the areas of Life, Information, Nature, Knowledge (LINK). The foundation supports educational, environmental and social development, and research projects that further LINK objectives by promoting strategic alliances for systemic and sustained change. Priority focus areas for LINK projects are educational and social media technologies, sustainable resource development, green technologies and Information and Communications Technologies (ICT).

REALPOLITECH (www.realpolitech.com/) is a digital public relations and web strategy consultancy. The firm focuses on the development of customizable, interactive campaigns and websites for dynamic public and private sector projects. Through web development and real-time and social digital public relations solutions, REALPOLITECH recruits participants, creating the most valuable asset for any business or cause: digital citizens.

California State Library (www.library.ca.gov/) is the central reference and research library for state government and the Legislature. It provides non-partisan research to the Legislature and the Governor and collects, preserves, generates and disseminates information ranging from California's priceless historical items to today's online texts. The California State Library advises, consults with, and provides technical assistance to California's public libraries and directs state and federal funds to support local public libraries and statewide library programs, and services.

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (www.knightfoundation.org/) supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. It aims to help sustain healthy communities in a democracy by leading journalism to its best possible future in the 21st century and to increase the ability of individuals to engage in change.

California Technology Agency (www.cio.ca.gov/) is the central IT organization for the State of California. The CTA is responsible for the approval and oversight of all state information technology projects. As the head of the Agency and as the state's chief information officer, the Secretary of California Technology provides leadership for the state's IT programs and works collaboratively with other IT leaders throughout the state.



California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) (www.cetfund.org/) provides leadership statewide to close the Digital Divide by accelerating the deployment and adoption of broadband to unserved and underserved communities and populations. Its mission is to ensure that California is a global leader in the availability and use of broadband technology. CETF makes investments in programs and projects to improve access, affordability, applications, accessibility and assistance to broadband. CETF supported the research, convened stakeholders, and sponsored the Governor's Executive Order promoting digital literacy. CETF is a primary underwriter of the iCALIFORNIA campaign.



Get Connected! (www.getconnectedtoday.com/), a project of the California Emerging Technology Fund, is a comprehensive statewide public awareness program to raise awareness about the economic and social benefits of broadband connectivity. The program aims to break down barriers and address misperceptions that perpetuate the Digital Divide that currently exist in California.

LINKS

Live event stream: www.ustream.tv/channel/jobscout (7:15 am PST)

Twitter: @myjobscout

Twitter for the event: #jobscout

YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/MyJobScout

Facebook: www.facebook.com/myjobscout