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press release

PARTNERSHIP TO BRING **VITAL** NEW RESOURCE TO NEW YORK STATE TEACHERS

Thirteen/WNET New York Joins With The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill, Education Development Center And Hezel Associates For "Video In Teaching And Learning," To Be Previewed At Major Education Conference In New York In March

Initiative Targets Individual Student Needs With Customized Video Instruction

New York, NY-March 24- New York State students will have an unprecedented classroom experience through **Video In Teaching And Learning (VITAL)**, a unique marriage of instructional media content and educational assessment. A partnership of Thirteen/WNET New York with The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill, Education Development Center and Hezel Associates, VITAL will provide New York State public school teachers with free access to video-based instructional tools designed to improve individual student achievement. A preview of **VITAL** will be presented on March 24th at Thirteen's inaugural Celebration of Teaching and Learning, a major new two-day professional development conference for teachers, administrators, parents, policy makers, business leaders and other friends of education in the tri-state area.

VITAL is a comprehensive endeavor to develop customized video-based classroom activities, aligned with New York State academic standards and linked to student test scores, for grades three through eight in Mathematics and English/Language Arts. This dynamic approach, combining video-based instruction with test results, is designed to enhance teaching effectiveness, support individual student needs and promote student achievement. This program will be used during the evaluation phase by selected teacher focus groups through 2007, and will become available to all New York public school teachers in 2008. **VITAL** resources will be delivered through The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill's online New York Teacher Report, a report that informs teachers about student assessment results in the context of state standards, as well as through the New York State Education Department's Virtual Learning System.

VITAL leverages the collaborative expertise of Thirteen's video and new media production experience, as well as its National Teacher Training Initiative professional development program, with The Grow Network/McGraw Hill's innovative educational assessment reporting. And as accountability is important in order to examine the

effectiveness of any education initiative, **VITAL** contains two components to measure the project's impact and provide feedback which will inform the project's ongoing development. Education Development Center's Center for Children and Technology, a leading research organization in the field of educational technology, will provide formative research on **VITAL**'s content to ensure that it stimulates and reinforces academic growth, while Hezel Associates will conduct scientifically-based experiments to document **VITAL**'s link to improved student results.

The New York State Education Department creates a strong learning framework for students, teachers and parents and provides dynamic reporting tools through its partnership with The Grow Network/McGraw Hill. **VITAL** builds on that innovative framework by providing students and teachers with learning tools to enhance learning and achievement.

"**VITAL** brings Thirteen's rich collection of educational videos to the classroom level," according to Anne Schiano, assistant director, Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Instructional Technology, New York State Education Department. "Aligning these resources to the New York State learning standards and making them available to teachers through the Education Department's Virtual Learning System is another powerful example of how USNY, the University of the State of New York, continues to support New York State teachers and students through quality online resources."

"**VITAL** is a wonderful example of utilizing the resources of public television - a true community organization - to make a positive, tangible impact in our communities' schools," said Ron Thorpe, vice president and director of education for Thirteen. "And I'm thrilled that such esteemed partners as The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill, the Educational Development Center and Hezel Associates have come together with us to administer this rich and vibrant resource and help teachers help their students."

"We are proud to lend to the **VITAL** project our proven experience serving the educators, students and parents of New York City over the last five years," said David Coleman, chief executive officer of The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill. "**VITAL** unites the vision of the New York State Education Department's leadership with Thirteen's exceptional educational video resources and The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill's unique assessment reporting."

"**VITAL** represents a significant opportunity to leverage public television's high quality content in ways that help teachers meet the learning needs of individual students through engagement with rich media," according to Margaret Honey, vice president of Education Development Center and director of EDC's Center for Children and Technology. "The evaluation of **VITAL** will give Thirteen and The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill a first chance to observe the impact of its two potentially powerful sets of resources-now united in **VITAL**. We look forward to testing **VITAL** under experimental conditions and measuring **VITAL**'s effectiveness in serving New York State's children and teachers," said Dr. Richard Hezel, president of Hezel Associates, LLC.

VITAL is a cooperative effort between The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill, Thirteen/WNET New York, Educational Development Center's Center for Children and Technology, and Hezel Associates to deliver optimum educational resources that help teachers meet their commitment to the goals of No Child Left Behind. Funding for **VITAL** was secured through grant submission to and approval by the United States Department of Education under the Ready to Teach Program. This federal funding in the amount of \$1.7 million dollars provides 50 percent of **VITAL**'s total costs, with the remaining 50 percent provided by non-governmental sources.

About Thirteen/WNET New York

Thirteen/WNET New York is one of the key program providers for public television, bringing such acclaimed series as *Nature*, *Great Performances*, *American Masters*, *Charlie Rose*, *Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly*, *Wide Angle*, *Secrets of the Dead*, and *Cyberchase* - as well as the work of Bill Moyers - to audiences nationwide. As the flagship public broadcaster in the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut metro area, Thirteen reaches millions of viewers each week, airing the best of American public television along with its own local productions such as *The Ethnic Heritage Specials*, *The Thirteen Walking Tours*, *New York Voices*, and *Reel New York*. Thirteen extends the impact of its television productions with educational and community outreach projects - including the Celebration of Teaching and Learning in Spring 2006. And as broadcast and digital media converge, Thirteen is blazing trails in the creation of Web sites, enhanced television, CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, educational software, and other cutting-edge media products. More information about Thirteen can be found at: www.thirteen.org.

About The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill

Established in March 2000, The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill has quickly become a nationally recognized leader in educational assessment reporting. The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill's innovative patent-pending system offers dynamic reports and differentiated learning tools in print and online for families, teachers, and educational leaders. As part of McGraw-Hill Education's Assessment and Reporting Group, The Grow Network/McGraw-Hill is owned by The McGraw-Hill Companies (NYSE: MHP), a leading global information services provider meeting worldwide needs in the financial services, education and business information markets through leading brands such as Standard & Poor's, McGraw-Hill Education, BusinessWeek and J.D. Power and Associates. The Corporation has more than 300 offices in 40 countries. Sales in 2005 were \$6 billion. Additional information is available at <http://www.mcgraw-hill.com>.

About Education Development Center Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) is an international, nonprofit organization that conducts and applies research to advance learning and promote health. EDC currently manages 335 projects in 50 countries. For more than twenty-five years, EDC's Center for Children and Technology (CCT) has investigated how technology can make a difference in children's classrooms, schools, and communities. CCT's work centers on three areas: research, including basic, formative, and program evaluation; design and development of technology prototypes, such as multimedia educational tools and materials; and the implementation and operation of large-scale technology integration efforts. Based in New

York City, CCT has a staff of more than forty researchers comprised of developmental psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, statisticians, producers and programmers, technology curriculum designers, former and current classroom teachers, and media specialists.

About Hezel Associates Hezel Associates provides research, evaluation, and strategic services to national and international clients in education, technology, publishing, and business. The firm has earned a distinguished national reputation as a leading expert in distance education research and consulting. Clients such as the U.S. Department of Education, Arizona Board of Regents, Habitat for Humanity International, the Public Broadcasting Service, Regis University, and the South Carolina Department of Education have relied on Hezel Associates' recommendations to make strategic decisions and create and implement policies. Dr. Richard T. Hezel, a leading research-oriented consultant in the field of education technology, founded the company in 1987. For further information about Hezel Associates, visit www.hezel.com

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