



For Immediate Release

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RAFT Honors 225 Champion Teachers at Event to Kick-off Teacher Appreciation Week

San Jose, CA April 21, 2011 – Who hasn't had a teacher who's made a difference in their or their children's lives? Resource Area for Teaching, RAFT, understands that being a teacher is especially tough today, when so many curriculum requirements must be accomplished with less classroom time, at lower grade levels, and a more diverse student base. RAFT will be honoring 225 of its Champion Teachers at a special event to kick-off Teacher Appreciation Week April 30, 2011 at 10am.

"I am moved every day by the creativity and tenacity that the great teachers in our schools demonstrate. These teachers are committed to educating and inspiring the next generation, and take their personal time and funds, both in short supply, to transform their students' quality of education and we want to honor that," said Mary Simon, Executive Director of RAFT. "These teachers use hands-on learning to foster 21st Century skills. They are swimming against the tide to rekindle the joy of learning and provide tools for learning, not just lists of facts to pass tests."

RAFT's Champion Teachers have all been members of RAFT for 10 years or more and have each had more than 100 visits to RAFT for mentoring, workshops, activity kits, idea sheets and more. In addition to helping their students master the "3R's," these great teachers understand the importance of the "4C's" – critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity – in preparing students to success in life as well as school. Hands-on learning plays a critical part teaching 21st Century skills.

RAFT's Champion Teachers come from all over the San Francisco Bay Area and consist of K-8 classroom teachers, high school teachers, home-school educators, special education teachers, pre-school teachers, after school program educators and volunteers.

Photo Opportunity: The event takes places from 10am – 11:30am. More than 100 Champion teachers will be honored for their exceptional work to engage students with meaning full hands-on activities.

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About RAFT

RAFT is a non-profit organization that transforms the learning experience by providing educators – inside and outside of the classroom – with the materials, training and support they need to increase student engagement and achievement. RAFT serves over 10,000 members through its San Jose and Redwood City, CA locations, and Sacramento, CA and Denver, CO affiliates. RAFT creates hands-on project idea sheets and activity kits that engage pre-K-12th graders in interactive and collaborative projects with a focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). Assembled by volunteers from largely donated materials, RAFT activities impact over 825,000 students. For more information, visit www.raft.net.