

NEWS RELEASE

July 21, 2010

**FRED ROGERS CENTER AT SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE
AWARDED KELLOGG FOUNDATION GRANT**

LATROBE, PA – The W.K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Michigan, has awarded a grant of \$343,606 to the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children’s Media at Saint Vincent College to improve learning and development for underserved children through creation of the Fred Rogers Center Early Learning Network.

“This generous grant will enable the Fred Rogers Center to establish and sustain a broad-based, virtual community of early learning teachers, home-based caregivers, and parents and other family members who are empowered by engaging technology-based resources,” commented Rita Catalano, Executive Director of the Center. “Especially through the project’s focus on underserved and under-resourced groups, it will help to increase the school readiness of vulnerable young children from birth to age 5 by developing the aspirations, and motivating the actions, of the adults in their lives as important agents of learning. The project is focused on promoting early language literacy, including the importance of conversation and dialogue between adults and children beginning at birth.”

“Just as Fred Rogers pioneered his distinctive approach to tapping the educational potential of television as the cutting-edge communications technology of his day, the Early Learning Network will build on this legacy by demonstrating the positive potential of new media and today’s technology for adult learners and young children alike.”

“Six objectives for the Early Learning Network were outlined in our proposal to the foundation,” added Michael Robb, program manager for the Early Learning Network. “These are to provide an online platform for coordinating the content and the delivery of resources with and across schools, centers, community organizations and homes; to increase access to professional development for early childhood teachers and home-based caregivers; to positively affect family members’ understanding and usage of television, computers and other digital media in educational, developmentally appropriate ways; to catalyze innovation in media-based content and delivery formats; to demonstrate a positive impact on school readiness for pilot groups of preschool-aged and younger children, through early literacy as well as social-emotional development; and to demonstrate the sustainability of an online resource that provides up-to-date content and interactivity in response to user interests, support needs and technology capabilities.”

The grant will fund activities at the Center over a two-year period from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2012.

Established in 1930, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation supports children, families and communities as they strengthen and create conditions that propel vulnerable children to achieve success as individuals and as contributors to the larger community and society. Grants are concentrated in the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean, and southern Africa. For further information about the Foundation, visit their website at www.wkkf.org.

The Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College (www.fredrogerscenter.org) was established in 2003. The Center houses the official archive of Fred Rogers' work including scripts, videos and set pieces from *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*. In addition to the Early Learning Network, the Center's national programs to advance the fields of early learning and children's media include the Fred Rogers Early Career Fellows; the Fred Forward Conference Series; the Learning Lives documentary project; and media literacy projects that engage children and adults as both users and creators of media.

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