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REAL School Gardens Awarded \$50,000 Motorola Grant to Fund Renewable Energy Project for Children

Fort Worth, Texas – June 30, 2009 – Motorola Foundation has awarded a \$50,000 grant to REAL School Gardens, a nonprofit organization that works with urban schools across North Texas to design and install learning gardens. The grant will fund a yearlong initiative for children focused on hands-on exploration and the use of alternative energy sources, specifically wind power, in school gardens.

An estimated 920 children, primarily Hispanic and African American, will not only learn about alternative energy in the classroom; they will also conduct research, design and build wind turbine blades and conduct solar experiments outdoors in their schools' gardens. The wind power and solar energy projects will be designed to generate enough voltage to power the gardens' water pumps.

The gardens are located in 57 elementary schools across several school districts, including Fort Worth, Birdville and Arlington. "Our teachers are going to help the students grapple with some very real challenges that scientists and engineers are exploring here in Texas as well as on a global level," said Jeanne McCarty, the organization's executive director. "I'm convinced this yearlong project is going to inspire the children to think creatively and help them to understand the importance of renewable energy."

The project will directly involve a core group of 40 classrooms in grades three through six. It will also involve professional development for REAL School Gardens' network of 1,400 teachers, including an all-day workshop August 6 entitled "Question the System: Exploring Alternative Energy in the Outdoor Classroom."

REAL School Gardens made the point in its grant application that there is a critical need to boost interest and learning in the sciences for Texas school children. Fifth-graders scored lowest on the earth science portion of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) science test in 2008.

The grant will enable teachers, students and community experts to focus attention on the growing wind power industry in Texas, giving the students an immediate understanding of the project's relevance. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory states that with proper development, wind energy could provide 20 percent of the nation's energy needs.

The Motorola Foundation's Innovation Generation grants support programs that engage students in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to build the confidence and skills they need for success both now and in the future.

"Innovation Generation programs make science and math both real and fun for today's students, bringing to life what they hear from their teachers every day," said Eileen Sweeney, director of the Motorola Foundation. "The work REAL School Gardens is doing to engage students in these subjects will help our next generation to succeed in a global, knowledge-based economy where critical thinking is no longer just a benefit, but a necessity."

About REAL School Gardens

REAL School Gardens cultivates relationships with elementary school communities to create learning gardens that raise hope, spark imaginations and connect children to nature.

Currently, REAL School Gardens works with 57 schools, ensuring that more than 30,000 children and more than 1,400 educators have daily access to nature through school gardens in North Texas. With plans to reach more students and school communities across the country, the organization is itself growing.

About the Motorola Foundation

The Motorola Foundation is the charitable and philanthropic arm of Motorola. With employees located around the globe, Motorola seeks to benefit the communities where it operates. The company achieves this by making strategic grants, forging strong community partnerships, fostering innovation and engaging stakeholders. The Motorola Foundation focuses its funding on education especially science, technology, engineering and math programming. For more information on Motorola Corporate and Foundation giving, [click here](#).