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15 Youth Who Completed Digital Skills Program to be Honored at Ceremony Thursday April 3 by Senator Joe Robach and County Executive Maggie Brooks

Rochester, NY— March 31, 2008 -- Fifteen young people who completed RochesterWorks! Digital Skills program will be honored at a Celebration Ceremony Thursday April 3, from 5-7 p.m. at Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Avenue (Bausch Auditorium). New York State Senator Joe Robach and Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks will award each youth a certificate.

Presentation Ceremony Agenda Thursday April 3, 5-7p.m.

Kate Bennett, President, Rochester Museum & Science Center
Maggie Brooks, Monroe County Executive
Joe Robach, NY State Senator
Hiram Hernandez, First Capital Payment, Participating Employer
Krystal Ealy, Gates-Chili 11th Grade Student, Digital Skills Program graduate
Presentation of Certificates

Digital Skills is an innovative program that trains high school students in technology and business and provides them with paid summer internships at local companies.

Administered by RochesterWorks! the rigorous eight-week program established in March 2005 utilizes an on-line curriculum that helps youth gain critical business and technical skills. Digital Skills is offered in conjunction with New York Wired for Education, local school districts and businesses. A grant from NY State Senator Joe Robach also helped fund the program.

“This program gives youth the skills and experience that will help them compete and succeed in today’s high-tech and global economy,” said Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks. “Connecting students with jobs at local companies is a vital part of our efforts to retain more young talent and enhance our vitality in the high-tech economy. These outstanding students should be commended for their hard work and dedication. I thank Senator Robach for making this program possible, and I also thank our community’s employers for their participation.”

Nine employers participated in the 2008 program, providing internship opportunities for program graduates. RochesterWorks! supported the internships by providing funding to companies for

the interns' wages. Each youth was paid \$7.15 per hour for approximately 20 hours a week over a six-week work period.

Senator Joe Robach said, "I am proud to continue to support the Digital Skills program at RochesterWorks! and their efforts to help provide young people with summer employment, valuable job skills and work experience that will greatly assist them as they seek career opportunities in the future. I commend these fine young people for completing this program and I thank the businesses that provided these internship positions. This program helps to ensure that our local employers have a prepared workforce and that our youth gain much needed experience and are ready to obtain employment and begin their careers."

"The program has provided an outstanding opportunity for young people to be exposed to high-tech careers in the local workforce and to gain practical experience and be better prepared to make career decisions," says Sergio Esteban, Vice Chair of Workforce Investment Board, which oversees RochesterWorks! and President and CEO of LaBella Associates PC.

Technical certification in the program equips participating youth between ages 14 and 18 in ten core competencies including time management, business etiquette, listening skills, and coping effectively with diverse populations. The program also teaches Microsoft applications including Word, Excel, Outlook and Power Point.

Employers that participated were:

- Center For Disability Rights, Inc.
- Democrat and Chronicle
- East Rochester Youth Activity Center
- First Capital Payments
- Gray CPA
- IBERO American Action League
- Rochester Museum & Science Center
- Rural Opportunities, Inc.
- University of Rochester

RochesterWorks! is dedicated to helping Monroe County develop a strong workforce. RochesterWorks! helps job seekers find jobs, move to higher paying jobs or get training to improve skills. RochesterWorks! assists businesses with recruitment, assessment, placement and training, and connects them to all federally funded employment and training programs in Monroe County. RochesterWorks! has helped attract millions of dollars in funding to support Monroe County companies and organizations.

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