



National Center for Technology Innovation
Advancing Technology Innovations for All Students

For Immediate Release
May 7, 2009

Contact: Becky Powell
(202) 403-6843

**Five Outstanding Research Partnerships Win the
National Center for Technology Innovation
2009 *Technology in the Works* Competition**

Washington, DC — The National Center for Technology Innovation (NCTI) announced today the recipients for the 2009 *Technology in the Works* competition. The award recognizes excellence in short-term, quasi-experimental evaluations that analyze the impact of learning and assistive technologies (AT), tools that strengthen capabilities and increase access for individuals with disabilities, such as spellcheckers and web browsers for blind students.

The annual competition evaluates the effectiveness of innovative and promising AT tools over a 6-month span to provide the field with information about what is working. Further, the competition builds greater awareness of and familiarity with AT tools in the education community and disseminates the results to help consumers make informed decisions.

The five award winners will explore these topics:

-Accuracy of Commercial Spellcheckers for Individuals With Disabilities, studying the efficacy and effectiveness of commercial spellcheckers for individuals with learning disabilities. Winners are Yael Karov Zangvil, CEO and Chief Scientist at Ginger Software, and Marshall Raskind, Educational Researcher and Consultant.

-Affordable, Mobile Technologies as Learning Tools for Students With Disadvantages, studying the impact of individualized instruction through the use of mobile technologies (e.g., *iPod Touches*, *Studywiz Spark*). Winners are Megan Whitmore of Southgate Community School District in Michigan and a University of Michigan-Dearborn graduate student, and Robert Longo, Executive Vice President at the Etech Group North America.



National Center for Technology Innovation
Advancing Technology Innovations for All Students

•**Differentiated Instruction Through the Use of *Stages Math: Number Sense Software***, studying the impact of software accessibility options for students with disabilities to develop number sense. Winners are Madalaine Pugliese, developer of *Stages Math: Number Sense* software, published by Cambium Learning Technologies; Russell Maguire, Associate Professor at Simmons College; and Karen Janowski at EdTech Solutions.

•**Hands-Free Interaction With Computers**, studying *Brainfingers*, hands-free software that assists students who are unable to use voice, a mouse, or a keyboard to navigate a computer. Winners are John Flach, Professor and Chair of Psychology at Wright State University, and Andrew Junker, founder, Brain Actuated Technologies.

•**Web Browsing Made Accessible for the Blind**, studying the target audience of the *WebAnywhere* non-visual web browser and opportunities for blind students to contribute to better access for all with the *TrailBlazer* browser extension. Winners are Jeffrey Bigham, a University of Washington graduate student, and researchers at IBM Almaden Research Center.

“This year’s winners represent an exciting cross section of breakthrough technologies that advance the learning and assistive technology field,” commented Tracy Gray, Director of the National Center for Technology Innovation at the American Institutes for Research. “We look forward to the knowledge these studies will bring to the field and result in greater opportunities for students with disabilities.”

Each of the five \$15,000 awards requires matching funds to conduct research that examines the effectiveness of innovative software and technologies for students with special needs. More information about these awards is available on the [National Center for Technology Innovation Web site](http://www.NationalTechCenter.org).

About the National Center for Technology Innovation

The National Center for Technology Innovation (NCTI) (www.NationalTechCenter.org), established in 2001, advances learning opportunities for *all* students, with a special focus on individuals with disabilities, by fostering technology innovation. NCTI offers technical guidance to facilitate growth and sustainability of learning and assistive tools. The Center is funded by the Office of Special Education Programs at the U.S. Department of Education and is located at the American Institutes for Research in Washington, DC.