



NEWS RELEASE

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Big Ideas Fest 2011 Aims to Transform Education With Scalable Solutions

Top Innovators in Education Attend Annual Conference in Half Moon Bay Dec. 4-7

December 1, 2011 (Half Moon Bay, CA) -- One hundred seventy-five teachers, innovators, edupreneurs, and policy makers with big ideas for transforming K-20 education are about to converge at the third annual Big Ideas Fest, Dec. 4 through 7, in Half Moon Bay, California (www.bigideasfest.org). Organized by the Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education (ISKME), the conference features keynotes by Martha Kanter, Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education and Danny Hillis, chairman and cofounder, Applied Minds and former VP of Disney Imagineering.

In addition there are sixteen RapidFire speakers, including Neeru Khosla, executive director of the CK-12 Foundation, offering customizable digital educational content; Kaycee Eckhardt, a reading teacher from the New Orleans Charter Science and Math Academy, which has for the past three years been first in the district in state testing while maintaining an open-enrollment, free-tuition policy; and Mark Milliron, chancellor of the online competency-based Western Governors University Texas.

Between speakers, participants collaborate in Action Collabs, design-oriented labs where they'll brainstorm, prototype, and ultimately create scalable solutions to major education challenges, such as achieving universal literacy and math competency, and leveraging open education to transform teaching and learning.

On the last day, December 7, the most noteworthy education solutions developing in the Action Collabs will be recognized during a Big Ideas in Beta session. Lisa Petrides, president of ISKME, says that "It's our goal that participants return to their environments energized and replenished with new resources and ideas for transforming education at the ground level."

Ralph Wolff, president of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), says of his 2010 experience, "Big Ideas Fest was truly one of the best designed and creative conferences I have attended in years. The Action Collab on alternative methods of credentialing, which I participated in last year, changed my thinking and has led me into exploring new approaches for WASC over the past year. The conference was so good I am sending a team to the 2011 conference and expect them to have similar experiences."

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Big Ideas Fest is organized by ISKME, the Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education, a pioneer in knowledge sharing and educational innovation. Lisa Petrides, president of ISKME, founded the nonprofit in 2002 to help educational institutions and their support organizations, such as foundations and government agencies, expand their capacity to collect, share, and apply information with the goal of creating open knowledge-driven environments focused on learning and success.