



Donald L. Carcieri
Governor

NEWS

Office of the Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, October 7, 2010

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Governor Carcieri Joins Educators, FAA, PTC, Business Community and Students to Launch the “Real World Design Challenge”

Governor Donald L. Carcieri today joined with educators, officials from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Parametric Technology Corporation (PTC), members of the business community and students at the Cranston Area Career & Technical Center to launch Rhode Island’s participation in the Real World Design Challenge, a nationwide challenge to improve high school students’ science, technology, engineering, and math skills.

The Real World Design Challenge is a public-private partnership started in 2008 that aims to increase the size of the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce by engaging students in “real world” problem-solving activities that will immerse them in STEM learning while stimulating interest in science, engineering and technology careers. Students are given the opportunity to work on real engineering challenges facing a leading industry in a collaborative, team-based environment, applying lessons learned in the classroom to technical problems in the workplace.

The 2010 challenge -- offered to schools and after-school programs free of charge -- requires teams of high school students to improve the wing design of airplanes using professional engineering software and studying the forces of flight, lift, thrust, and drag with the goal of enhancing fuel efficiency. Students will be required to convincingly present their solution, and teams in each state with the best design win an all expenses paid trip to the national finals in Washington, D.C.

Since registration for the challenge opened on this week, four schools in Rhode Island have signed up to participate, including the Cranston Area Career and Technical Center, Woonsocket High School, North Providence High School, and Smithfield High School. Interested high schools and after school programs

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may register a team at www.realworlddesignchallenge.com. Free teacher training is available online at www.ptcacademy.com. Teams are required to register for the Real World Design Challenge by November 19, 2010, and must submit their solutions by January 31, 2011. State winners will be announced during the week of February 16 – 22, 2011.

“The Real World Design Challenge is consistent with my administration’s mission to help Rhode Island students gain proficiency in science, math, and technology and prepare them for higher education and well-paying jobs,” said Governor Carcieri. “The Challenge incorporates teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity, and leadership – all essential skills for success in industry – and makes science, technology, engineering and mathematics learning relevant and exciting for our students.

“Hands-on learning experiences such as the Real World Design Challenge are critical for developing a workforce to accommodate the requirements of industry in our state and nation, and they are vital to students who need advanced skills to succeed in the jobs of our 21st century economy. I urge all Rhode Island high schools to investigate the opportunities provided by the challenge and make this exciting activity available to their students,” the Governor added.

The partnership brings professional tools and resources to both students and teachers. Teachers who coach teams at participating schools and after school programs will gain access to \$1 million in professional engineering software and professional mentors. The challenge is designed by professionals from industry, academia and government, who also support the program as mentors, designers, and judges who share their knowledge and evaluate student work. Students are required to take on real industry roles such as project manager, scientist, engineer, and community relations and marketing managers.

“The FAA understands the importance of science, technology, engineering, and mathematic programs such as the Real World Design Challenge. This program demonstrates what we can accomplish through public-private partnerships,” said Amy L. Corbett, FAA Regional Administrator, New England Region. “The Real World Design Challenge will inspire students across the State of Rhode Island and prepare them with the STEM skills necessary in the 21st century.”

“The Real World Design Challenge partnership helps address the growing industry demand for workers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics,” said Dr. Ralph K. Coppola, Director of the Real World Design Challenge & Director of Government & Strategic Education Programs for PTC. “The Real World Design Challenge bridges the needs of the industry with the future of education. It teaches innovation, creativity, collaboration and other 21st century skills using the expertise that industry, government and higher education have been perfecting for decades. With this real world approach to learning, we can keep our workforce strong and ensure America’s prosperity for the future.”

“The company I helped found here 32 years ago, now called Simulia, develops engineering software tools that are used for the most sophisticated strength calculations, including those related to aircraft design. So I know how challenging it is to design wings that are aerodynamically efficient yet strong enough to carry passengers safely through severe turbulence or to allow a fighter pilot to make extreme maneuvers,” said David Hibbitt, a member of Rhode Island’s Science Technology Advisory Council. “Simulia employs engineers, mathematicians and computer scientists worldwide, with 375 employees here in Rhode Island. The challenge we are announcing today will introduce student participants to the appeal of such fascinating work. I hope some of them will, like me, spend their careers in pursuit of excellence in engineering design, right here in Rhode Island.”

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“To succeed in the workplace of the 21st century, our graduates will need a wide range of skills, including proficiency in mathematics and science, the ability to work in teams, and the capacity to solve complex problems,” said Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “These are exactly the skills that the Real World Design Challenge recognizes and fosters. I am pleased that Rhode Island high schools have taken up this exciting challenge, and I thank our partners in business and industry for stepping forward to work with our students and to prepare them for success.”

Mentors and judges are currently being sought by the Challenge. Rhode Island professionals in education (both secondary and post-secondary), engineering, and industry may register to participate by contacting Peter McLaren, Rhode Island state coordinator, at peter.mclaren@ride.ri.gov or (401) 222-8454. Anyone interested in lending their expertise for the national competition among state winners can sign up at the Real World Design Challenge website at www.realworlddesignchallenge.org and look for the word “Mentor” under “Sign Up.”

To view a short video showing students engaged in the Real World Design Challenge, visit <http://www.ndep.us/Real-World-Design-Challenge> .

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