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Carnegie Mellon's Information Networking Institute and CyLab Receive Grant From Verizon Foundation for Cyberawareness Outreach

PITTSBURGH—Carnegie Mellon University's Information Networking Institute and CyLab have received a \$20,000 grant from the Verizon Foundation. During a visit to the St. Bede School in Point Breeze today, faculty, parents and students learned that the funds would help to deliver a community-wide cyberawareness outreach program.

“This dynamic cyberawareness outreach program will design, create and deliver targeted educational workshops and materials that raise cyberawareness and promote safe and responsible computing to teachers, children, and parents in the St. Bede community,” said Dena Haritos Tsamitis, director of the Information Networking Institute and director of education, training and outreach for Carnegie Mellon CyLab.

Tsamitis said two web-based tools — the MySecureCyberspace portal and the Carnegie Cyber Academy children's Web site — will be central to the delivery of the community cyberawareness modules and assessment of student outcomes.

“We are extremely pleased to be part of this outstanding initiative where our educational community will learn how to protect itself from cyber security threats and also learn about the importance of safe, responsible online behavior,” said Mary Drummond, principal of St. Bede School, where students in grades 1-4 will sample some of the new cyber tools.

“Our children are growing up in a digital world. It is how they communicate, learn and share ideas,” said William B. Carnahan, vice president-external affairs, Verizon Pennsylvania. “Online technology has had a tremendous impact on our society, and its role will continue to grow with further advances. Verizon is proud to partner with Carnegie Mellon University to educate and empower students, parents and teachers in the Point Breeze community to enjoy a safe experience while on the Internet.”

“The innovation coming out of Carnegie Mellon will give our young people the tools to be safer in this increasingly computer-driven society,” said Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstah. “This

Page 2 of 2 / Carnegie Mellon's Information Networking Institute, CyLab Receive Grant From Verizon Foundation partnership is an example of how we can collaborate with our world class universities to make our communities healthier and safer.”

Today, more than 89 percent of children are social networking online, while less than 34 percent of their parents are aware of these risky activities, according to a recent report by the Pew Internet and American Life Project.

Carnegie Mellon researchers have created the MySecureCyberspace portal to help the public better understand the dangers of surfing the Web. The portal (www.mysecurecyberspace.com) offers an encyclopedia of terms, relevant articles and tools to combat cyberbullying, identity theft and the dangers of online predators. The MySecureCyberspace game is an interactive game designed for fourth- through sixth-graders that teaches safe Internet use and computer security. Players join the cyber defense training program at the Carnegie Cyber Academy, where training missions cover everything from how to spot spam to how to keep personal information private.

“This grant will help both students and parents alike understand the risks associated with online activities like the viruses spread over instant messaging and the bullying that takes place in unsupervised chat rooms,” said Tsamitis, who daily assesses how safe her teenagers are from threats to her home computer.

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About Carnegie Mellon: Carnegie Mellon (<http://www.cmu.edu>) is a private, internationally ranked research university with programs in areas ranging from science, technology and business, to public policy, the humanities and the fine arts. More than 11,000 students in the university's seven schools and colleges benefit from a small student-to-faculty ratio and an education characterized by its focus on creating and implementing solutions for real problems, interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation. A global university, Carnegie Mellon's main campus in the United States is in Pittsburgh, Pa. It has campuses in California's Silicon Valley and Qatar, and programs in Asia, Australia and Europe. The university is in the midst of a \$1 billion fundraising campaign, titled “Inspire Innovation: The Campaign for Carnegie Mellon University,” which aims to build its endowment, support faculty, students and innovative research, and enhance the physical campus with equipment and facility improvements.