

NEWS RELEASE

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Humanitarian partnership seeks AlphaSmart laptop donations

AlphaSmarts for Africa program will distribute laptops to Kenya schools

November 20, 2007, Wisconsin Rapids, WI – In the spirit of the holiday season, Renaissance Learning, Inc. and Generation for Change and Growth (GCG), a non-profit aid organization, announced today the launch of a joint humanitarian program called AlphaSmarts for Africa.

In an effort to help teach fundamental skills to students in areas where illiteracy rates are as high as 93%, the partnership will provide schools in Northern Kenya with donated AlphaSmart laptops for use in classrooms, preparing students for today's high-tech world. The organizations have set a goal to reach 10,000 donated laptops by the end of March 2008.

AlphaSmart laptops have been instrumental in improving the writing and keyboarding skills of millions of U.S. students over the past 15 years. Through this donation program, the AlphaSmarts for Africa project hopes to improve literacy skills among students in Africa.

“The majority of Northern Kenyan children have never even seen computers in real life. Computers and technology are something that these students can only learn about through books, and that reality is just unacceptable,” said Greg Wright, Senior Vice President and General Manager for Renaissance Learning's Electronics Division. “An AlphaSmart laptop can make a huge impact for students in a Kenyan classroom, with even a single laptop providing up to 25 children with access to vital technology skills.”

The partnership asks North American schools, as well as consumers, to donate any used AlphaSmart units, regardless of the model or their condition. Donated laptops will be refurbished by the company, packaged, and sent to Africa for distribution. Generation for Change and Growth (GCG) will then distribute the donated AlphaSmart laptops in the Kenyan schools and provide valuable training for teachers on how to use them in their classrooms. In addition, Renaissance Learning will provide donors with a \$50 discount toward a brand-new AlphaSmart NEO or NEO 2 laptop for each donated unit.

“Constant power interruptions and in some cases, absolute lack of electricity, make the AlphaSmarts an ideal solution in the region. The AlphaSmart laptops are battery driven, with each one running for up to 700 hours on AA batteries, and that makes all the difference,” said Dr. Ali-Young Mahamud, co-founder of GCG. “It is exceedingly necessary that every child experiences the pleasure of learning through technology. This project is making this reality come sooner to this poverty-stricken area than anyone would imagine.”

Additional details about the program and how to donate are available at www.alphasmart.com/helpachild.

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About Renaissance Learning, Inc.

Renaissance Learning, Inc. is the world's leading provider of computer-based assessment technology for Pre-K–12 schools. Adopted by more than 73,000 North American schools, Renaissance Learning's tools provide daily formative assessment and periodic progress-monitoring technology to enhance core curriculum, support differentiated instruction, and personalize practice in reading, writing and math. Renaissance Learning products help educators make the practice component of their existing curriculum more effective by providing tools to personalize practice and easily manage the daily activities for students of all levels. As a result, teachers using Renaissance Learning products accelerate learning, get more satisfaction from teaching, and help students achieve higher test scores on state and national tests. Renaissance Learning has seven U.S. locations and subsidiaries in Canada, India, and the United Kingdom.

The company's AlphaSmart laptops help promote valuable writing practice in classrooms across the country. The newest addition to the line is the NEO 2, launched June 2007, which combines the best features of a standard laptop with a classroom response system, and adds keyboarding, writing and assessment software to provide teachers with everything they need in a single, low-cost device.

About CGC

The Generation for Change and Growth is a 501c3 nonprofit organization in the United States and Non-governmental organization (NGO) in Kenya. Generation for Change and Growth was founded in November of 2002 to promote health and educational initiatives in Northern Kenya and other East African regions and to provide and expand these services to immigrants and refugees coming to Minnesota from these areas. The GCG's vision is helping this generation for a better world tomorrow. In pursuing our vision, the GCG seeks to eradicate illiteracy and improve education by working with the community, schools, families and students to strengthen and promote academic success. This increased performance will allow students to embrace life after school more confidently and succeed in professional roles and thus become contributing members locally and globally. For more information about GCG, visit www.thegcg.org.

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