

## **Online learning and virtual schools provide essential new skills for 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs**

VIENNA, VA, Nov. 9/U.S. Newswire/ -- In an increasingly competitive global economy, online learning through virtual schools offers the advanced learning necessary for today's students to acquire 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, according to a new report by the North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) and the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. Online courses offered through e-learning platforms and virtual schools must incorporate 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in the course design and delivery.

“Eighty-four percent of employers say K-12 schools are not doing a good job of preparing students for the workplace – not only in mastery of math and science but in a basic work ethic,” said NACOL president Susan Patrick. “As a nation we have to do better, and research shows that online learning provides an increasingly valuable tool for 21<sup>st</sup> century content, collaborative, interactive, networked course designs and self-directed learning skills.”

The report outlines how rapidly growing virtual schools and online learning – with an estimated 30 percent annual growth rate in K-12 education enrollments – focus on what the Partnership has identified as critical 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, including: global awareness, self-directed learning, information and communications technology literacy, problem solving, time management and personal responsibility. The report is available on the NACOL Web site (<http://www.NACOL.org>).

NACOL is the nation's leading K-12 organization of teachers, administrators and policymakers in the field of online education.

The Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills brings together business, community, education leaders and policymakers to define and advocate the infusing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into education.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: NACOL president Susan Patrick is available for interviews.

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