

For Immediate Release
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Twiga Foundation announces Block Fest™ Agreement With the University of Idaho

(Boise, ID) – Research shows that children build math and science skills from the earliest years of life and that play provides a natural learning lab for such development. Block play offers a rich opportunity for early math and science learning and the development of social, emotional, language, motor and cognitive skills.

The Twiga Foundation, Inc., located in Boise, Idaho, is pleased to announce that it has signed an agreement with the University of Idaho for the exclusive license to produce and distribute Block Fest™, a program designed to help parents support the development of pre-math and science skills through block play for children ages 8 months to 8 years. Block Fest™ was developed by the University of Idaho's Parents as Teachers program in 2005 in response to the demand for increased math and science skills in the workforce of the future. "The research leading to Block Fest™ under the direction of Dr. Harriet Shaklee and her team in the Family and Consumer Sciences Department shows that the foundations of learning are laid early in life," noted Dr. Gene A. Merrell, Associate Vice President for Research. He added that the Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) which oversaw the licensing of Block Fest™ is pleased that the Twiga Foundation will oversee the promotion of Block Fest™: "Twiga's interest in promoting education that will benefit the public demonstrates its commitment to the people of the state of Idaho and the nation."

Block Fest™ has enjoyed great success offering its curriculum to programs and communities in Idaho for the last four years. Additionally, Block Fest™, trained educators in North Carolina, Texas, Indiana and Washington. In 2006, Block Fest™ was awarded the Losos Prize for Excellence by Parents as Teachers National Center. Most recently, Block Fest™ was awarded the 2009 Excellence in Extension Award at Annual Conference. In July 2009, Twiga will conduct Block Fest™ training in St. Louis, Mo., for the Parents as Teachers National Center in preparation for the 25th Anniversary of Parents as Teachers celebration.

The Twiga Foundation, founded by former Idaho First Lady Patricia Kempthorne, is dedicated to inspiring, promoting and maintaining family-consciousness in the home, the workplace and the community. The Twiga Foundation is currently involved across the nation with various projects addressing the qualities of a creative and productive American workforce for the 21st century.

- The Twiga Foundation and the Center on Aging and Work at Boston College developed the States-as-Employers of Choice project to work with the public sector workforce in state governments focusing on workplace flexibility through career stages.
- The Families & Work Institute of New York partners with Twiga and the Institute for a Competitive Workforce at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce coordinating with 30 cities and 3 states promoting workplace flexibility as part of an effective workplace strategy

and recognizing a selection of the best employers in each community with the Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility.

- The Twiga Foundation works with Georgetown Law in Washington, DC, to champion the Workplace Flexibility 2010 project in the development of thoughtful public policy related to workplace issues.

Kemphorne said, “With the addition of Block Fest™ to enhance the Twiga Foundation mission, we are investing in family-consciousness at home and the development of the workforce of the future.”

For more information about Block Fest visit www.Blockfest.org, or contact the Twiga Foundation at 208-343-1551 or info@twigafoundation.org.