PRESS RELEASES

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Ecolab to Give Half-Million to Teachers Through Education Grant Program

ST. PAUL, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Feb. 15, 2001--In keeping with its 20-year tradition of supporting community schools, Ecolab has allocated more than $500,000 for grants to individual classroom teachers for curriculum materials.

"Ecolab has always supported education in a variety of ways," said Lois West Duffy, Ecolab's director of community and public relations. "The focus of this Visions for Learning grant program really is to help kids in grades K - 12 who may be reluctant learners and to reward creativity in teachers by providing additional classroom materials to help reach learning goals. We hear all the time how much of their personal money teachers have to spend to improve the learning experience for their students. We feel strongly about partnering with those teachers to help fill that gap."

She added, "This program started in 1982 and, as far as we know, is still the only one of its kind in the Twin Cities and in other communities where Ecolab has a strong presence. We know how important a strong education system is to our success as a corporation."

The Visions for Learning grants - which consist of two categories: A Program for Primary School Educators and A Program for Secondary School Educators - are funded through the Ecolab Foundation. Ecolab contributes 1.2 percent of its U.S. pre-tax earnings into this foundation to be channeled into the community.

A Program for Primary School Educators grants are given to kindergarten through sixth-grade teachers to creatively motivate children and help them achieve at grade level in basic skills. Projects funded in the past include mentoring programs, with older children tutoring second- and third-graders, and camping trips so inner-city students can link with high school mentors to learn about geology, history and the outdoors. The money has also been spent on simple necessities such as warm mittens and boots. A committee composed of Ecolab associates and one educator is screening those requests now, and winners will be announced in late March. Recipients will be honored at spring awards ceremonies.

A Program for Secondary School Educators grants help seventh- through 12th-grade teachers enrich the classroom experience and engage students. Grants have helped purchase high-interest reading materials, supplies for hands-on science experiments, stories on tape and other classroom materials. Grant winners will be announced in April.

A total of $175,000 will be awarded in Saint Paul. In addition, fourteen Ecolab locations will award teacher grants - between $20,000 and $35,000 for each location. This calculates to about 100 schools and thousands of students that will be touched by the program in this year alone.

"Part of our corporate culture has to do with social responsibility and service to the community," said Ecolab's Vice President of External Relations, Michael Monahan. "That's where this program fits in. Not only does it contribute positively to the community, but it benefits Ecolab in the form of engaged employees and better educated students, some of whom may one day work for our company."

Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, maintenance and water purification products and services for the hospitality, institutional and industrial markets. For the year ended Dec. 31, 2000, Ecolab reported sales of $2.3 billion; including European joint venture sales of $0.9 billion, Ecolab's global sales coverage was $3.2 billion. Ecolab shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange and the Pacific Exchange under the symbol ECL.

Ecolab news releases and other investor information are available on the Internet at www.ecolab.com and by telephone at 1-800-FACT-ECL.

CONTACT:

Ecolab, St. Paul
Michael Monahan
651/293-2809 (Tel)
651/225-3123 (Fax)

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