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Learning Forward announces 2011 Award Winners

DALLAS—December 6, 2011—Learning Forward presented its prestigious awards at its 2011 Annual Conference in Anaheim, Calif. Learning Forward’s annual awards program recognizes individuals for their commitment to improving student achievement through effective professional learning. School Improvement Network sponsored the 2011 awards.

Learning Forward honored Carl A. Cohn with the **Contribution to the Field Award**. This award is Learning Forward’s highest honor bestowed to individuals for their impact on the field of professional development. A national leader in education for more than 30 years, Cohn dedicates himself to building the capacity of teachers and principals to improve the performance of all students. Cohn is Co-Director of the Urban Leadership Program and Clinical Professor in the School of Educational Studies at Claremont Graduate University. Cohn is also a board member of ACT, Inc., the Center for Reform of School Systems, and EdSource.

Each year, Learning Forward recognizes one member with the **Distinguished Service Award** for his or her selfless leadership and unwavering support of the organization. This year the board was delighted to present the award to two outstanding individuals — Karen Anderson and Kathy Kee. Anderson and Kee have served Learning Forward members for over 20 years by advocating for Learning Forward’s purpose and standards, presenting and facilitating numerous conference sessions, and coaching Learning Forward members. Anderson led the Texas affiliate as executive director for eight years, and she continues to support state affiliates and organization initiatives. As a Past President and six-year Board of Trustees member, Kee helped establish long-term goals and policies and supported the staff in its work.

Chad Dumas received the **Best Research Award** for his study “Building Leadership: The Knowledge of Principals in Creating Collaborative Communities of Professional Learning.” Building on the understanding that a culture of collaboration for teachers creates better results for students, Dumas studied what principals know about creating such a culture. One noteworthy finding from the study was that those who participate in a professional learning team show a significantly different and better understanding of student learning than those who do not. Dumas is Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment at Hastings Public Schools in Nebraska.

The **Susan Loucks-Horsley Award** honors the memory of Susan Loucks-Horsley by recognizing an individual who exemplifies Susan’s commitment to instill efficacy in others, collaborate across boundaries, and sustain impact on the field of professional development. This year Learning Forward was pleased to present this award to Kathy DiRanna, an individual known for her leadership and commitment to quality science and mathematics education. As statewide director of WestEd’s K-12 Alliance, DiRanna oversees grant-funded programs such as the California Math and Science Partnership and the California Postsecondary Education Commission. Kathy has shaped the quality of science teaching over the past 25 years through her extensive work in systemic reform. In addition to working on numerous state committees and programs, she has co-developed several national projects and co-authored two books.

About Learning Forward (formerly National Staff Development Council)

Learning Forward's purpose is ensuring that every educator engages in effective professional learning every day so every student achieves. Learning Forward is a nonprofit, international association of learning educators focused on increasing student achievement through more effective professional development. To learn more about the impact of high-quality professional learning, visit

www.learningforward.org.