



For Immediate Release

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The UK Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA®) Board Chair Receives Innovator of the Year Accolades

Washington, DC, May 6, 2008--The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA) announces that Mark Phillips, Chair of SIFA UK and director of data services at the Department for Children, Families and Schools (DCFS), received runner-up as the Innovator of the Year at the prestigious Government Computing Awards for Innovation 2008 ceremony.

The GC Awards is the longest serving accolades in the field of public sector IT in the UK. Mark Say, Editor of GC magazine and chair of the judging panel, commented, "The breadth and quality of the entries we received shows the public sector is really committed to harnessing the power of technology in making itself more efficient and providing better services."

On receiving the award Mark Phillips said, "This is a great achievement and reflects where we've got to in the SIFA community, both here in the UK and internationally. Our principles of Governance, our transparency and our desire to put the individual learner and their experience of Education - and, potentially, other support systems - at the heart of our work is what has made this possible. I'm delighted to have been able to play my part in bringing all of this together and hope that it can be a milestone on the road to further progress."

SIFA UK is one of the international SIFA organizations that works together to lead the technical development of a world-class specification and certification program to enable data interoperability for education. SIFA UK, working with SIFA, convenes education stakeholders in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, identifies collective data needs and develops solutions for data interoperability—from the school to the government level. This approach allows for the localization and adoption of the SIF Specification, Certification Program and Data Model, localization of a Governance model, and creates local/national SIF pilot projects for the leveraging of technology investments.

"Mark receiving this award reflects the thoughtful and cutting edge leadership he shows across the educational community in the UK", cites Dr. Larry Fruth II Executive Director of SIFA. "The SIF UK community is about providing real solutions to data identification, management, movement and utilization but most of all it is about the bigger picture – the community. Mark's leadership has made the creation of this community a reality."

Additional information about the Government Computing Awards for Innovation 2008 can be found at:

<http://www.kablenet.com/kgc.nsf/WebPagesFrontPage/gclInnovationAwards>.

Additional information about SIFA UK can be found at: <http://uk.sifinfo.org/>

About The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA)

SIFA is a unique, non-profit collaboration composed of over 1400 schools, districts, states, US and International Departments of Education, software vendors and consultants who collectively define the rules and regulations for educational software data interoperability. The SIF Implementation Specification enables diverse applications to interact and share data efficiently, reliably, and securely regardless of the platform hosting those applications. SIFA has united these education technology end users and providers in an unprecedented effort to give teachers more time to do what they do best: teach. For further information, visit <http://www.sifinfo.org>.

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