

# News Release

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## **AT&T Awards \$35,000 Grant to Tincan to Help Address High School Dropout Crisis**

**Spokane, Wash.--** AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T) today announced the award of a \$35,000 competitive High School Success grant to address high school retention in Spokane through the Tincan program. The grant is one of more than 170 schools and nonprofit organizations which will receive almost \$12 million in competitive grants from the AT&T Foundation that are designed to support high school retention programs at national and local levels for at-risk students.

America's Promise Alliance has noted that nearly one-third of U.S. high school students drop out before graduating — with about 7,000 students dropping out every school day, or one every 26 seconds.

Tincan's project focuses on ninth grade boys at Rogers High School who have been identified as being at significant risk of dropping out of school. The boys will be enrolled in an after school club that will meet twice weekly. In the club, they will identify a business to develop that meets both their interests and community needs. They will be paired with a business mentor who will guide them through the challenges and opportunities facing their business. Through developing a business plan, they will learn what the educational requirements of the business are, and be introduced to practical issues that they may not have been exposed to at home: financial management, workplace ethics, insurance, etc.

In addition to their business web site students will also produce a short 5-10 minute video of their mentor's business to tell the story of the business's role in the community and what a career in that business requires. All of the student work – web pages and videos – will be placed on the project web site and on Tincan's non-profit YouTube

channel for greater exposure. The program will also run in summer 2009 for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students transitioning into high school.

Tincan's project is based on an earlier successful program using an e-commerce curriculum to improve student school performance. Each project activity requires the students to use reading, writing, or math to achieve concrete ends. The program has been enhanced by adding new technical skills, resulting in an increase in participants' soft skills and technology fluency.

Commenting on the new grant, Dr. Karen Michaelson, Tincan's Director notes that "To address high school retention, students need to see that what they learn applies to the real world. They need to be able to find hope and motivation by completing a real project that is relevant to their lives."

Tincan is a non-profit 501c3 organization that uses interactive media and information technology for education and community development. Each of our programs uses technology in innovative ways. Our teen programs not only provide secondary school youth with technology skills that will be useful to their workforce participation, but also connect teens to their community through civic engagement.

The High School Success grants are part of the company's signature initiative, AT&T Aspire, which was announced earlier this year and helps address high school success and workforce readiness. AT&T has committed \$100 million in philanthropy through 2011 to schools and nonprofit organizations that are focused on high school retention and better preparing students for college and the workforce.

"We are passionate about supporting programs like the Tincan project that addresses key factors in high school retention. As a major corporation, we are concerned about our workforce competing in the global economy; as a corporate citizen, we are perplexed by the enormous loss of human potential. By helping students graduate from high school and encouraging them to continue their education and start building their careers, we can help students succeed - not just in school, but in life," said AT&T External Affairs Director Dan Youmans.

“I'd like to thank TINCAN and AT&T for seeing the talents and potential of the students at Rogers High School to create businesses and a better future for themselves and our community,” said State Senator Lisa Brown.

As one of the largest-ever corporate commitments to high school retention and workforce readiness, the \$100 million AT&T Aspire program will support organizations with strong track records that promote educational success, from the classroom to the workplace. The recipient programs of this year's High School Success grants provide a range of support for students, including academic intervention, mentoring and tutoring services.

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