



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Shakopee Junior High School Receives National Award for Excellence in STEM Education

**Clifton Park, N.Y.**—Project Lead The Way, the nation's leading provider of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) curriculum, has announced its list of the 2010-11 Model Schools, the most coveted award the organization hands out annually. Shakopee Junior High School in Shakopee, Minn., is one of just 16 schools to receive the award this year out of the 4,200 eligible schools across the country.

Shakopee Junior High School is home to the PLTW Gateway to Technology (GTT) program, a program that challenges and engages the natural curiosity and imagination of middle school students. Students at Shakopee envision, design and test their ideas with the same advanced modeling software used by companies like Lockheed Martin, Intel and Sprint. They study mechanical and computer control systems, like robotics and animation. Students also explore the importance of energy, including innovative ways to reduce, conserve and produce it using solar, thermal and wind power. Through the PTT program, Shakopee Junior High provides rigorous, hands on STEM curriculum that inspires students, unlocks their potential, and prepares them for the competitive, 21<sup>st</sup> Century global marketplace.

“Mr. TJ Hendrickson strives to give his best to the PLTW students at Shakopee Jr. High by empowering them to believe in themselves and reach for the stars,” said PLTW Upper Midwest Regional Director Ken Maguire. “It’s no surprise Shakopee was selected as a 2010-11 Model School.”

2010-11 Model Schools were selected based on their strength in several key categories, including a robust program implementation, excellent postsecondary relationships,

outstanding communications and outreach, solid professional development and a strong level of student engagement. A group of PLTW State Leaders and Affiliate Directors from across the country then evaluated each school based on unique program attributes. Schools with the greatest overall scores were selected as Model Schools.

This year's Model Schools come in all forms, sizes, and locations. There are middle schools and junior high schools as well as high schools. Some high schools implement both of PLTW's high school curriculums, while others serve their student population with only one. Schools range in size from large to small and reside in 13 different states. Yet, they all share common characteristics: a high percentage of the overall student population engaged in PLTW courses, strong partnerships with business, industry, and post-secondary institutions that actively support the curriculum and give students added real-world experience and mentors, a robust student recruitment strategy, and a commitment to professional development.

[Click here to view a map of the 2010-11 Model Schools](#)

"We are excited to recognize these schools for their exemplary work with students on a daily basis," said PLTW President and CEO Vince Bertram. "Teachers in these classes are inspiring students and unlocking their potential for success and achievement. This work does not happen in isolation. The community, business, and industry partnerships that make this work possible should be commended as well."

Please join us in congratulating Shakopee Junior High School as a 2010-11 PLTW Model School. To visit or to arrange for an interview, please contact Jennifer Cahill at 812-483-5124 or [jcahill@pltw.org](mailto:jcahill@pltw.org).

[Image](#) A student at Shakopee Junior High in Shakopee, Minn., builds a rocket during a Gateway To Technology PLTW course.

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#### **About PLTW**

Project Lead The Way, Inc., a nonprofit organization with 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt status, is the leading provider of rigorous and innovative STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education curricular programs used in schools. PLTW's comprehensive curriculum has been collaboratively designed by PLTW teachers, university educators, engineering and biomedical professionals, and school administrators to promote critical thinking, creativity, innovation and real-world problem solving skills in students. The hands-on, project-based program engages students on multiple levels, exposes them to areas of study that they typically do not pursue, and provides them with a foundation and proven path to college and career success. More than 4,200 schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia are currently offering PLTW courses to their students. For more information, visit [www.pltw.org](http://www.pltw.org).