



Press Release

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Strategic partnerships are key to spreading digital culture in 2012

November 30, 2011

ICDL GCC Foundation, has revealed key pillars of its 2012 plan, focusing on expanding the reach of the ICDL programme with the aim to raise digital readiness across the region. This announcement comes on the sidelines of a ceremony hosted by ICDL GCC Foundation today (Wednesday, November 30, 2011) to recognize various stakeholders in appreciation of their support towards the ICDL Summer Camp 2011, which empowered thousands of students from around the Arabian Gulf region with computer skills that drive them to achieve academic excellence and integrate today's digital society.

During the event, the Foundation highlighted key statistics that outline the milestones of the ICDL programme, which has become a standard measure for education and integration in the job market. The numbers revealed that an average of 278 individuals (based on the numbers from the past 5 years) enroll in the ICDL programme every day in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. In addition to that, over 600,000 candidates have benefited from the programme since its inception in these countries, representing approximately 1.6 per cent of the region's population. The Foundation also explained that this turnout is due mainly to a comprehensive methodology followed by many government and semi-government agencies in the region, based on their belief in the importance of empowering human resources to accelerate the creation of a knowledge-based society, in line with the rapid changes in an IT-driven world.

Moreover, educational institutions are increasingly adopting ICDL in their curriculum, given the growing importance of IT in the development of education and habilitation of a generation that is creative, innovative and keen on utilising the latest advancements in technology and digital revolution. This has prompted ICDL GCC Foundation to step up its efforts targeted at supporting this sector during the next year.

During the event, the Foundation commended the role of key partnerships with the Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC), the Ruler's Court of Sharjah and the ministries of education in the GCC countries who have extended their support to the ICDL Computer Summer Camp 2011. The Foundation underlined the importance of constructive cooperation with partners in all educational institutions and major private companies, as part of their commitment to social responsibility initiatives, and the advancement of educational reforms as part of national development strategies that are in place across the region.

Jamil Ezzo, Director General, ICDL GCC Foundation, underlined the integral relationship between education and technology, explaining the importance of the ICDL certificate in encouraging participants to think out of the box and deal effectively with the latest developments in the world of information technology and communications. He also pointed out that the ICDL certificate has become an important criterion to reach the highest levels of education and achieve career progression, as several universities and colleges, private sector companies and a

number of government agencies are today testing the proficiency of students and job seekers in the use of various computer applications and the internet, as a prerequisite.

Ezzo also highlighted that the development of the education sector is a key component of ICDL GCC Foundation's strategy for 2012 aimed at increasing digital readiness among all segments of society including students, employees, women, retirees and people with special needs, in line with government efforts to build integrated knowledge-based communities in the Arabian Gulf region. "The ICDL GCC Foundation was keen to host this awards ceremony in recognition of the efforts and support of the various organisations and governments in the region. We are committed to working together to further extend the reach of the summer camp next year, reflecting our common goal for the near future," he added.

During the event, a "Distinction Award" was presented to Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC), the Ruler's Court of Sharjah and Dubai Aluminum Company - DUBAL. A "CSR Award" was presented to Abu Dhabi Systems and Information Centre (ADSIC), ITP Publishing Group, Canon Middle East, Nokia, 3M Gulf, CompTIA Ltd., Brother International, HP Middle East, Microsoft Gulf, Wendy's, Dubai Dolphinarium, Seawings, Dreamland Aqua Park, and Wild Wadi. The "Implementation Award" recipients included the Higher Colleges of Technology, Abu Dhabi University, UAE University, Al Khamael School, University of Sharjah, New Horizons Centre in Qatar, Kuwait University and Sultan Qaboos University in Oman. The Foundation also announced winners of the "ICDL Best Practice Award" which recognizes the excellence of ICDL certified centers in the implementation of ICDL programs to accelerate digital transformation and the creation of knowledge-based economies. Dubai Health Authority (DHA) won the first place in this award category, while Kuwait University ranked second.

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