

*For fourth consecutive year*

## **ICDL & HSBC launch Summer Camp groups to reinforce digital literacy of UAE's underprivileged children**

*114 children from Dubai & Sharjah to be trained on essential computer skills and cyber safety*



**UAE, August 8, 2015:** ICDL Arabia, the governing body and certification authority of the ICDL certificate program in Egypt, GCC States and Iraq, and HSBC Bank Middle East Limited, the leading global financial services organization, have collaborated for the fourth consecutive year to train 114 children from Dubai and Sharjah on fundamental digital skills and cyber safety knowledge and offer them international certification on the same. The latest edition of the ICDL Summer Camps will empower underprivileged youth with essential computer skills and cyber safety, enabling them to earn international certificates on the same.

The camp activities kicked off on August 2, 2015 and will continue until August 27, 2015 as part of the annual regional ICDL summer camps, which were launched on July 26, 2015 locally and regionally, with the aim to provide young people with basic skills to use the computer and learn how to safely use smart devices and social networks. This camp is funded by HSBC Bank in a joint effort with the ICDL to reach groups with limited income, especially young people, and increase their awareness about the importance of the safe use of the internet. The collaboration between the two parties has trained 570 boys and girls to date.

The UAE Red Crescent has been one of the main parties involved in the camp in the last 3 years. This year it has once again extended its cooperation by providing the names of boys and girls to be enrolled. For the first time, 64 boys and girls will be participating from Dubai. Moreover, the Social Services Department of the Government of Sharjah has provided excellent support for the event by opening up its computer labs to be used for training and testing the two girls and boys groups of Red Crescent Sharjah.

Jamil Ezzo, Director General of ICDL Arabia, said: “ICDL camps have been very successful for the past 14 years in the region and we appeal to socially responsible companies to support such initiatives. There is a need to increase digital literacy among young people and prepare them to face all challenges and threats lurking in the cyber world. We seek, through the annual ICDL summer camps, to achieve these desired goals of supporting and promoting awareness for digital efficiency to ensure equal opportunities for young people across the region.”

Sabrin Rahman, Senior Manager – Corporate Sustainability at HSBC Bank Middle East Limited, said: “Our cooperation with ICDL for the fourth year in a row comes in the context of our relentless pursuit to support all initiatives aimed at giving young people the necessary digital skills and raise awareness on e-Safety. As in every year, we aim to support the 2015 ICDL summer camps to promote the digital competence of young people and improve the competitive capabilities that they enjoy to help ensure that the next generation will have basic digital skills and knowledge.”

Furthermore, ICDL has signed a contract with two well-known academic institutions in Dubai for the implementation of the camp services through certified and competent trainers. The National Institute for Vocational Education (NIVE) – an initiative of the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) in Dubai – will provide training and testing services to a group of girls in Dubai and the two groups of girls and boys in Sharjah. Al Dar University College in Garhoud, Dubai will provide training and testing services to another two groups of boys and girls in Dubai.

The funding from HSBC Bank covers the transportation to and from the homes of camp for all kids as well as food and beverages. The summer camp will conclude with the distribution of gifts to all participants and awards for outstanding performance during the graduation ceremony. Booklets containing tips for the safe use of the web will also be distributed.

From 2012 to 2014, HSBC-funded ICDL summer camps empowered orphaned boys and girls and people with limited income aged between 13-19 from Sharjah and the Northern Emirates. The 2012 camp succeeded in helping 72 attendees from Fujairah and Ras Al Khaimah to acquire basic skills for using the computer. In 2013, the camp attracted about 200 boys and girls from either orphanages or low-income homes in Ajman, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah and Sharjah. In 2014, the camp had 184 boys and girls from orphanages or low-income groups from Ajman, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah and Sharjah as well as from Umm Al Quwain for the first time to learn the basic skills for using social networking sites and the best practices for ensuring online safety.

-ends-