

Houston Public Media Announces Houston Teacher Selected for the 2017 Digital Innovators Program

Krissy Venosdale of The Kinkaid School recognized for her game-changing integration of digital media in the classroom

HOUSTON – (May 3, 2017) – Today, Houston Public Media announced Krissy Venosdale, the innovation coordinator from The Kinkaid School, as one of 52 educators from across the country selected for the fifth annual PBS Digital Innovators Program. The program recognizes classroom changemakers: educators who skillfully approach education with a bold and fresh perspective, and who integrate digital media and resources into their classrooms in a way that sparks a love of learning for their students.

Venosdale developed her school’s makerspace, a creative space for pre-kindergarten through fourth-grade, called “The Launch Pad,” which is focused on computer science, design, engineering and fabrication. A panel of esteemed judges selected the 52 PBS Digital Innovators from across the U.S., representing each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

“Our computer lab was really restricting our student’s ability to collaborate and be creative so we created this space to empower them,” said Venosdale. “Technology is all around us and I truly believe in giving kids the support to experience technology in a productive way. We are empowering them to bring their dreams to life every single day. It’s exciting to see our five-year old’s, for example, coding robots or designing cardboard towers and experience failures and make mistakes – we’re instilling optimism, persistence and resilience that will help them succeed in life.”

The PBS Digital Innovators will participate in ongoing professional development; share their ideas on PBS platforms; have access to exclusive resources from PBS LearningMedia; receive a free PBS Teacherline professional development course; and are invited to special events, including the 2017 PBS Digital Summit. This year’s summit, in San Antonio, Texas, takes place directly before the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) conference.

“We are so proud that a Houston teacher was selected for this program,” said Lisa Trapani Shumate, associate vice president and general manager of Houston Public Media. “Contributing to the education of children is central to our mission so it’s important for us to engage with teachers like Krissy who are instilling forward-thinking teaching methods into their classrooms.”

Among other teachers selected were educators who are using 3D printers with their students to create prosthetic limbs; a technology coach whose classroom is a “STEM Bus” and co-teachers who use technology to bring their students together in one class, even though they’re in physical classrooms that are miles apart.

“We were struck by the creativity and passion of this year’s applicants,” said Sara Schapiro, vice president of education, PBS. “The 2017 PBS Digital Innovators are a passionate group of

educators who are committed to changing the way students learn through technology and digital media. Education is at the core of PBS' mission and as a key partner with parents and educators across America, we're excited for the opportunity to learn from and work with these classroom change makers as they partner with PBS member stations to share content that truly engages and empowers students in every community."

The full list of the 2017 PBS Digital Innovators, their profiles and photographs can be found [here](#).

More than 100,000 digital resources, including lesson plans, worksheets, video content, and more, are available through PBS LearningMedia for pre-K-12 classrooms. Teachers can access this content at www.pbslearningmedia.org.

###

About Houston Public Media

Houston Public Media combines broadcast and digital assets to serve residents of Southeast Texas with a curated mix of trusted local news and entertainment with exceptional national programming from NPR and PBS. Houston Public Media is a public service from the University of Houston, its license holder, and is supported with financial gifts to the Houston Public Media Foundation. With a combined weekly audience of more than 1.5 million, Houston Public Media is committed to delivering content that expands minds and possibilities with trusted information. Connect on Facebook at facebook.com/houstonpublicmedia and Twitter at twitter.com/houstonpubmedia.

About PBS Education

PBS Education provides all educators with access to high-quality, standards-aligned content for the classroom and professional development and peer-to-peer experiences to enrich teaching and learning opportunities in classrooms across America. Through partnerships with nearly 350 local member stations, PBS Education supports and connects prek-12 teachers, parents and communities to help students reach their full potential both in and out of the classroom. PBS Education meets the needs of today's educator with offerings that include: [PBS LearningMedia](#), [PBS TeacherLine](#) and the [PBS Digital Innovators](#) Program. More information about PBS Education is available at www.pbs.org/education or by following PBS Education on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Media Contacts:

Lori Pennington
Carbonara Group
o: 713-524-8170
lori@carbonaragroup.com

or

Cherri Carbonara
Carbonara Group
o: 713-524-8170
cherri@carbonaragroup.com