



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

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Governor's Press Office ♦ Room 308, Main Capitol Building ♦ Harrisburg, PA 17120  
www.governor.state.pa.us ♦ 717-783-1116 (Phone) ♦ 717-772-8462 (Fax)

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*EDWARD G. RENDELL, Governor*

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**CONTACT:**  
Michael Race (PDE)  
717-783-9802

Gary Miller (Gov)  
717-783-1116

**GOV. RENDELL SAYS PENNSYLVANIA STUDENTS TO HELP  
AVIATION INDUSTRY GO GREEN WITH  
'REAL WORLD DESIGN CHALLENGE'  
*PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PROVIDES STATE-OF-THE-ART SOFTWARE,  
MENTORING TO STUDENTS, TEACHERS***

**HARRISBURG** – Pennsylvania high school students will hone their science and technology skills while helping to solve real-world challenges facing the aviation industry under a public-private partnership announced today by Governor Edward G. Rendell.

The “Real World Design Challenge,” a national competition hosted by the U.S. Department of Energy, will enable high school students to work alongside industry and government experts to learn engineering skills through problem solving.

“The Real World Design Challenge gives our students a unique opportunity to solve real problems, take on real roles in science and engineering and make real contributions to society,” Governor Rendell said. “It also complements Pennsylvania’s efforts to promote the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) initiative that is helping to ensure that Pennsylvania’s students have the necessary skills to compete and succeed in the global economy.”

Secretary of Education Gerald L. Zahorchak said the design challenge bridges the goals of education with the needs of the high-tech industry.

“Thanks to this effort, students will have access to a global engineering education program that will help prepare them with the capabilities needed to succeed,” he said. “They can tap into the latest technology and the brightest mentoring minds to learn to be innovative and creative. The end result is highly skilled students who can keep our workforce strong and competitive for years to come.”

Pennsylvania is among the first 10 states to announce a partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy on the Real World Design Challenge, which will be initiated in the 2008-2009 school year. Eventually, all U.S. states and territories will be invited to participate.

The Real World Design Challenge enables high school students to take on engineering challenges in a team environment by asking them to address an issue facing one of the nation's leading industries. This year's challenge focuses on more efficient energy use in aeronautics.

Teams of students and a teacher will develop solutions to the challenge, and those solutions will be evaluated by scientists, engineers, college and university faculty and teachers. The best solution in each state will be announced by each governor at an awards ceremony, and the winning team in each state will compete in a national challenge held in Washington, D.C.

To aid the effort, high school teachers trained in design and global engineering will each receive approximately \$1 million worth of professional engineering software donated by the Parametric Technology Corporation and Flomerics Inc. The Department of Energy and the Federal Aviation Administration will provide science and engineering mentors, and Hewlett-Packard will provide computer servers to host the software and facilitate collaboration between participants.

For more information on Pennsylvania's education initiatives, visit [www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us). To learn more about the PA STEM Initiative, visit [www.pasteminitiative.org](http://www.pasteminitiative.org).

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*The Rendell administration is committed to creating a first-rate public education system, protecting our most vulnerable citizens and continuing economic investment to support our communities and businesses. To find out more about Governor Rendell's initiatives and to sign up for his weekly newsletter, visit [www.governor.state.pa.us](http://www.governor.state.pa.us).*