

**Mind over Matter  
Global Education Initiative**

August 1-2, 2007  
Plano, Texas

# SEMINAR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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AUGUST 2007

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# MIND OVER MATTER GLOBAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE REPORT

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## OVERVIEW

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The Mind over Matter Global Education Initiative held their kick off meeting on August 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Plano, Texas. An innovative team of individuals and organizations participated to discuss challenges facing the education system and our children, as well as ways of enhancing the state of global education. This team's mission is to effectively bring about positive change in the way our youth are educated, encourage imagination and increase their interest in science and technology. The initiative's objective is to empower the community to develop collaborative projects which bring the best that each has to offer, in order to develop an inter-sectoral program that will significantly and measurably enhance our children's interest in science and technology. Through our website and other collaborative efforts discussed in this report, we hope to share valuable ideas and projects with a global community that brings in a variety of perspective to this common challenge and helps lead us to new, revolutionary approaches to overcome it. The report is a summary of the main results of this gathering which was organized and facilitated by Ahoora Foundation and Prodea Systems, Inc. A complete list of the participants is included in Appendix A, and a complete list of the organizations represented is included in Appendix B. The detailed agenda for the event is provided in Appendix C.

This document is only a summary of our seminar. The full report is for the initiative members only and is posted under the members only section of our website.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This kick-off meeting was intended to familiarize the participants with the initiative and seek their input on the objectives and how to best achieve them. The meeting was also an opportunity for the participants to introduce the projects they are involved with or programs they believe are effective. The meeting was an excellent start to the initiative's long term objectives. The ultimate success of this team and this initiative will depend on the level of participation and commitment of the team and will have to be measured over a long period of time.

The participants and their background information was presented through general introductions and these five general areas:

- New methods and tools for teaching
- New curriculum
- Educator training programs & tools
- Other complimentary ideas
- Perspectives of students, parents and teachers

The presentations ignited discussion on different topics that highlighted the challenges and the approaches to overcome those challenges. The discussion was captured in the form a matrix which was named the "Education Mosaic." Based on the consensus on the most pressing challenges, focus

groups were formed to drive specific actions forward. Our initial set of focus groups are defined below but they can change, if needed, as we move forward:

- Initiative Strategy Focus Group – an executive committee to help guide the timing and direction of this initiative including messaging, programs, plans, etc.
- Resource Focus Group – This group will act as the gatekeeper for a resource depository website that will become an on-line resource (i.e. Zagat.com) for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education. The group will recommend the format of the database as well as criteria for the programs to be added to the database. This group will also create the initial list of resource links to be presented on the website. The X Prize foundation has offered to host and maintain this website as part of the X Prize education initiative.
- Teacher Focus Group – This group will include teachers as well as representatives from other sectors with the main goal of finding ways to elevate the status of teachers in our society and to help address their challenges. A specific approach recommended was to use the media to change the image of teachers. A few projects discussed such as a reality TV show about teachers or a special awards event like the Academy awards of education.
- Space Education Focus Group – This group will develop potential strategy and plans around using space initiatives and programs to help stimulate interest in youth in STEM education.
- Marketing Focus Group – This group will develop a marketing plan for the initiative (branding, PR, media. schedule, etc) complimentary to the other teams' work.

The majority of the participants want to play an on-going active role in this endeavor and our goal is to bring on other active individuals and organizations to ensure our success. We are building a web site to continue on-going collaboration for the entire group and to educate others on our initiative, goals and objectives. We agreed to meet as an entire group at least once a year. In the meantime, we will use other forms of communication (web, reports, our blog, etc) to keep each other informed and to measure our progress.

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## APPENDIX A: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Below is the list of individuals who participated at the seminar held August 1-2, 2007:

- Anousheh Ansari - Prodea /Ahoora Foundation/Ashoka
- Rafael Alvarez – Genesys Works
- Dr. Solyman Ashrafi – Quantum xTel
- Katrine Balch, U.S. Space & Rocket Center
- Dr. Jeanne Lynn Becker - NSBRI/Baylor College of Medicine
- John Carmack – id Software & Armadillo Aerospace
- Brenda Carr, U.S. Space & Rocket Center
- Dr. Leroy Chiao, Astronaut
- Dr. Sonia Rahmati Clayton, NSBRI/Baylor College of Medicine
- Dr. Scott Dulchavsky, NSBRI/Wayne State University
- Susan German, National Science Teachers Association
- Terri Griffin, Prodea
- Katayon Haghighi, Ahoora Foundation
- Kris Herbst, Changemakers.net
- Dr. Harry Kloor, Jupiter 9 Productions
- Michael Lindsay, X PRIZE
- Brad Lisle, Foxfire Interactive
- Miranda Martin, U.S. Space & Rocket Center
- Gregg Maryniak, St. Louis Science Center
- Cindy McArthur, NASA
- Erika Moye, Prodea
- Christine Nam, ISU
- Dr. Geoffrey C. Orsak, SMU
- Tim Phillips, PISD

- Julia Rottier, U.S. State Department
- Dennis Stone, World Space Week
- Dr. J. Carter M. Tiernan, University of Texas at Arlington
- Melody Timinsky, PISD
- Carol Valenta, St. Louis Science Center
- Tom Vander Ark, X PRIZE
- Karen Marmer Wald, Foxfire Interactive
- Dr. Gerald Wheeler, National Science Teachers Association
- Jan Whelan, PISD
- Brenda Wojnowski Ed.D., Texas High School Project/Communities Foundation of Texas

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## APPENDIX B: ORGANIZATIONS

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Below is the list of organizations and companies that were represented at the seminar.

- Ashoka Foundation
- Baylor College of Medicine
- Changemakers.net
- Foxfire Interactive
- Genesys Works
- Id Software
- International Space University
- Jupiter 9 Productions
- NASA
- National Science Teacher's Association
- National Space Biomedical Research Institute
- Plano Independent School District
- Prodea Systems, Inc.
- Quantum xTel
- Southern Methodist University
- St. Louis Science Center
- Texas High School Project/Communities Foundation of Texas
- University of Texas at Arlington
- U.S. Space & Rocket Center/Space Academy for Educators
- U.S. State Department
- Wayne State University School of Medicine
- World Space Week
- X PRIZE Foundation

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## APPENDIX C: SEMINAR AGENDA

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Below is the agenda for the 2-day seminar:

### Wednesday, August 1<sup>st</sup>

- 1:00pm – 1:15pm Welcome and Introductions  
1:15pm – 2:00pm Opening Remarks – Anousheh Ansari  
2:00pm – 3:25pm Introductory Presentation by participants (7 minutes each)

#### New Methods and Tools for Teaching:

- Carol Valenta (Saint-Louis Science Center): Informal learning in museums  
Gregg Maryniak (J.S. McDonnell Planetarium): The Egg Prize program  
Scott Dulchavsky (NSBRI) : Terrestrial applications and benefits of space research/science outreach  
Brad Lisle (FoxFire) : IMAX space film- Free Fall  
Rafael Alvarez: Genesys Works Solution

#### New Curriculum:

- Brenda Wojnowski (STEM) : T-STEM initiative of the Texas High School project  
Harry Kloor (Jupiter 9 Productions): Changing curriculum in science  
Geoffrey Orsak (SMU): Current K-12 engineering programs

#### Educator Training Programs and Tools:

- Christine Nam (ISU): An interdisciplinary approach to space studies: A resource package for educators  
Katrine Balch (U.S Space & Rocket Center) : Professional development programs that Center offers for teachers  
Jeanne Becker (NSBRI) : NSBRI's educational programs

#### Other Complimentary Ideas:

- Michael Lindsay (X PRIZE) : Education X PRIZE series of competitions in development  
Dennis Stone (World Space Week Association) : The power of synchronization  
Kris Herbst (ASHOKA): ChangeMaker Competition  
Leroy Chiao (Astronaut): Education Outreach

3:25pm – 3:40pm Break

3:40pm – 4:10pm Perspectives:

- Nima Ashrafi (Student): His success and why some other students shy away from science  
Terri Griffin: Input from other students ages 10-15  
Solyman Ashrafi: A parent's perspective  
Susan German (NSTA): Teacher's challenges  
Jan Whelan (Plano ISD): Curriculum challenges

4:10pm – 5:00pm Q & A with the Presenters and Discussions

- 5:00pm – 5:15pm Introduction of the Educational Mosaic – Anousheh Ansari
- 5:15pm - 6:30pm Open Dialogue about existing challenges and barriers and roadblocks for the potential solutions
- 6:30pm -7:15pm Cocktails
- 7:15pm - 10:00pm Dinner

**Thursday, August 2nd**

- 8:00am - 8:30am Continental Breakfast
- 8:30am - 12:00pm Review of the Mosaic. Weave through potential ideas toward a national and global approach to the outlined problems and challenges
- 12:00pm – 1:00pm Working Lunch
- 1:00pm - 4:00pm How to move forward/Next steps
- Keeping the group informed of each others activities
  - Provide means of communicating the group ideas to the outside world
  - Engage other good programs and organizations to participate
  - How to create and effective way for collaboration
  - Who and how to facilitate networking between organizations
  - Setting milestones and goals for the group
  - How to measure progress and success
  - Etc.