

# ***NEWS RELEASE***



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## **Mary's Center for Maternal & Child Care Wins Verizon Tech Savvy Award**

*Washington, D.C., Nonprofit One of Five Organizations  
Recognized for Innovative Programs That Help Parents  
Understand the Technology Their Children Use*

**WASHINGTON** – The Even Start Program of Mary's Center for Maternal & Child Care has been selected as one of four regional winners of the third annual Verizon Tech Savvy Awards.

The program will receive \$5,000 to continue and expand its efforts.

Representatives of the program were recognized this week during a banquet at the 18th annual National Conference on Family Literacy, hosted by the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) in Orlando, Fla.

Three other programs in California, Louisiana and Minnesota also received regional awards. The Verizon Tech Savvy National Award was presented to the Indigenous Language Institute in Santa Fe, N.M., which received \$25,000.

“Mary’s Center is honored to be a recipient of this award, which enables us to provide the valuable educational base our families need to succeed,” said Maria Gomez, president and CEO of the center. “Learning cannot end when the school day ends. Every moment presents a learning opportunity, and we must capitalize on our time with students and their parents to engage, educate and inspire them to excel.

“The foreign-born population is a rapidly growing segment of our population that enriches every aspect of community life,” Gomez added. “We are grateful that Verizon also recognizes that improving English proficiency and literacy are a critical component to helping people succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This award supports our efforts to equip immigrant learners with the necessary tools to lead happy and productive lives.”

The Verizon Tech Savvy Awards are a joint creation of NCFL, former First Lady of Iowa Christie Vilsack and the Verizon Foundation. It is the first national award designed to provide an incentive for grassroots, community-based nonprofit organizations and schools to create programs that demystify technology for parents, enabling them to better guide their children in the use of new media.

William R. Roberts, Verizon’s regional president for Maryland and Washington, D.C., said: “Technology is a tremendous tool in efforts to expand educational opportunities for all children and improve literacy. To truly improve educational achievement in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, learning must stretch well beyond the school day and into community programs and homes.”

Mary’s Center for Maternal & Child Care’s Even Start Family Literacy Program aims to increase English literacy of children and parents through English-as-a-second-

language classes, early childhood development activities, computer classes and parenting workshops. To learn more, visit [www.maryscenter.org](http://www.maryscenter.org).

Details of the programs honored at the Verizon Tech Savvy Awards will be added to Verizon's [Thinkfinity.org](http://Thinkfinity.org) to serve as an educational resource, highlighting best practices and approaches for technology literacy for people of all ages. [Thinkfinity.org](http://Thinkfinity.org) is the Verizon Foundation's free, comprehensive Web site containing more than 55,000 educational resources, including standards-based, grade-specific, K-12 lesson plans, online educational games, videos and other materials provided in partnership with many of the nation's leading educational organizations.

The Verizon Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Verizon Communications, supports the advancement of literacy and K-12 education through its free educational Web site, Thinkfinity.org, and fosters awareness and prevention of domestic violence. In 2008, the Verizon Foundation awarded more than \$68 million in grants to nonprofit agencies in the U.S. and abroad. It also matched the charitable donations of Verizon employees and retirees, resulting in an additional \$26 million in combined contributions to nonprofits. Through Verizon Volunteers, one of the nation's largest employee volunteer programs, Verizon employees and retirees have volunteered more than 3 million hours of community service since 2000. For more information on the foundation, visit [www.verizonfoundation.org](http://www.verizonfoundation.org).

The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) is the worldwide leader in family literacy. More than 1 million families have made positive educational and economic gains as a result of NCFL's work, which includes training more than 150,000 teachers and thousands of volunteers. For more information, contact 1-877-FAMLIT-1 or visit [www.famlit.org](http://www.famlit.org).

Verizon Communications Inc. (NYSE:VZ), headquartered in New York, is a leader in delivering broadband and other wireline and wireless communication innovations to mass market, business, government and wholesale customers. Verizon Wireless operates America's most reliable wireless network, serving more than 80 million customers nationwide. Verizon's Wireline

operations include Verizon Business, which delivers innovative and seamless business solutions to customers around the world, and Verizon Telecom, which brings customers the benefits of converged communications, information and entertainment services over the nation's most advanced fiber-optic network. A Dow 30 company, Verizon employs a diverse workforce of nearly 224,000 and last year generated consolidated operating revenues of more than \$97 billion. For more information, visit [www.verizon.com](http://www.verizon.com).

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Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care is a federally qualified health care center that has been serving DC Metro area residents for more than twenty years. The mission of Mary's Center is to build better futures through delivery of health care, education and social services as we continue save lives and strengthen communities, one family at a time. [www.maryscenter.org](http://www.maryscenter.org)