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ASTD Global Network Mexico and Avilar Join to bring Network's First Virtual Meeting

Columbia, MD – February 28, 2006 - ASTD GN Mexico President Margarita Lozano has more challenges than the typical ASTD Chapter President. Not only does she have to conquer membership and budget issues, she has to coordinate meetings with a diversely-located roster. There are eight different cities represented in the sole global Mexico network, some several hundred miles away from one another. With the new virtual meeting method provided by Avilar Technologies, Inc, Margarita can now speak to all members without burdensome travel, schedule and expense conflicts.

Prior to the ASTD and Avilar cooperation agreement, the network held a few Mexico City-located meetings only local members could attend. "Before this relationship, members outside of Mexico City would not enjoy the full benefits of membership, such as participation in events and interaction with each other," said Lozano.

Avilar's Director for Latin America and ASTD member Victor Sanchez recognized the need for both organizations to collaborate. "The Mexico ASTD Global Network chapter and Avilar are both relatively new to the region and both need increased visibility among training and developing professionals," said Sanchez. "Avilar's decade of service as an eLearning and competency management provider pairs perfectly with ASTD's mission to increase workforce learning and performance."

The meeting was held at IMESFAC in Mexico City, the most widely accessible location. At this site, members listened and viewed the meeting on a large screen while remote members accessed the webinar from the convenience of their offices. A network camera allowed remote members to see the attendees at IMESFAC. The meeting kicked off with speaker Hal Gerrish, a twenty-year veteran in competency management and Avilar's Director of Competency Management, who spoke on skills assessments in theory and use in today's workplace.

Gerrish gave a thorough analysis of the many uses of competency management in organizations as well as the steps of implementation. A question and answer session followed. "The members were clearly interested," said Gerrish. "I received so many in-depth questions we went over the allotted time. It was reassuring to know so many

members were already thinking about or in the process of implementing competency management.”

The meeting continued with Lozano’s annual activity report to members, followed by a review of upcoming events. Lozano also conducted a survey on training and development trends in Mexico which will serve as the basis for a panel discussion she will participate in at the ASTD 2006 International Conference next May in Dallas, Texas.

The participation from attendees proved the success of the event. “The feedback we received was very positive,” said Lozano. “We hope that this new method for conducting meetings will help increase the value of ASTD membership, particularly for residents of cities other than Mexico City, and thus increase membership of ASTD GN Mexico.” Sanchez added, “In a city as large and congested as Mexico City, we believe this new form of meeting will be of interest to local members as well. In fact a few members chose to participate remotely rather than spend time driving to and from the event.”

Both organizations expressed their hope that their relationship will encourage other joint-ventures between learning organizations and learning providers. Sanchez added that he hopes ASTD and Avilar will continue to collectively increase workforce learning and performance in Mexico.

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About Avilar Technologies

Avilar Technologies, The Competency Company™, provides web-based competency management and learning solutions for the corporate, government and academic sectors. With its Know, Grow, Go solution, Avilar offers a competency-based approach to workforce development. Formed in 1997, Avilar was a pioneer in the e-Learning marketplace. The flagship WebMentor® product line, originally introduced in 1998, includes a complete suite of affordable, easy-to-use, and full-featured competency development and management tools. Avilar is the recipient of the Excellence in E-Learning for Customer Satisfaction award from Brandon Hall and E-Learning Magazine, and was cited by Training Magazine as a top “Price-to-Value” provider.