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**SMART Launches “Recycling Rangers” Program for America’s Teachers**

*Free Lesson Plans for Elementary School Students Promote Awareness of Clothing and Textile Recycling*

**Bel Air, Maryland (November 15, 2013)** – In conjunction with America Recycles Day, today, The Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association (SMART) is launching its **Recycling Rangers** program for elementary school teachers. The goal of this year’s educational program is to heighten student, teacher and family awareness of clothing and textile recycling by engaging more than 2,500 teachers in grades Kthrough5 in its Recycling Rangers program. In addition to free lesson plans for their classrooms, teachers are also encouraged to promote recycling by organizing textile recycling drives at their schools.

The Recycling Rangers program includes monthly activities for teachers and students which will be used to teach children about the positive impact of clothing and textile recycling. One of the goals of the program is to have teachers become Recycling Rangers and to have their school host a clothing and textile recycling program. SMART member companies are sponsoring 14 regions throughout the United States and are prepared to work with the teachers and their schools to host a textile recycling drive. Teachers who participate by hosting a textile recycling event have the opportunity to win monthly prizes for their classrooms.

The Recycling Rangers program builds on the highly successful 2012-13 academic year, “Wear It? Recycle It!” lesson plan program. During the “Wear It? Recycle It!” program, more than 300,000 students learned about clothing and textile recycling.

The grade-appropriate lesson plans can be downloaded at no cost by visiting [www.themailbox.com/smart](http://www.themailbox.com/smart). The web site also allows teachers to sign up to host their own textile recycling drive when they become a Recycling Ranger.

“We are very excited to present the Recycling Rangers program to teachers and students. As the trade association of the clothing and textile recycling industry, SMART’s goal is to reach more than 1 million students with the positive message of textile recycling by the end of 2015,” says Jackie King, Executive Director of SMART. “Our member companies really stepped up by sponsoring regions throughout the United States to make it as easy as possible for teachers to host a clothing recycling event at their own school.”

The Recycling Ranger program runs through March 2014. In addition to the Recycling Rangers web site, teachers can learn more about the program in *Learning* magazine, via *The Mailbox* elementary school activities, in an e-newsletter, and on The Education Center's Facebook page, Twitter account and in various blogs.

For additional information, contact Paul Bailey at the Fallston Group at 410-420-2001 or by email at [paul.bailey@fallstongroup.com](mailto:paul.bailey@fallstongroup.com).

### **About**

**Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles (SMART)** is an international nonprofit trade association that strengthens the economic opportunities of its diverse membership by promoting the interdependence of our industry segments and providing a common forum for networking, education and trade. Since 1932, SMART has been at the forefront of recycling. SMART members use and convert recycled and secondary materials from used clothing, commercial laundries and non-woven, off spec material, new mill ends and paper from around the world. SMART member companies create thousands of jobs worldwide. SMART members prove each day that you can make money by being socially responsible. For additional information on SMART, visit the association's website at [www.SMARTasn.org](http://www.SMARTasn.org). The following link will take you directly to informational videos on textile recycling <http://www.smartasn.org/about/videos.cfm>. To download the iRecycle app visit [www.Earth911.com](http://www.Earth911.com). The app allows users to find clothing and textile recycling drop-off locations in their area.

**The Education Center** was founded in 1973 by Marge and Jake Michel who, like many other educators, were frustrated by the lack of practical, ready-to-use materials for the classroom. So they created several products in their spare time, and the company grew from there. Countless teachers have contributed to **The Mailbox®** for more than 30 years. Some teachers are so excited about the opportunity to create ideas for other teachers that they join our staff in Greensboro, North Carolina.

As the company has grown over the years, our staff of former teachers has continued to produce high-quality, practical, ready-to-use materials for other elementary teachers. Hundreds of thousands of teachers across the country depend on our products to enrich their lesson plans, to speed up their planning time, and to leave them more time to do what they love best—teach. This family of creative people has helped to insure that our products are known and loved by teachers throughout the country. As a matter of fact, **The Mailbox®** is America's #1 teaching resource!

Because our products are developed by teachers with hands-on classroom experience, all our materials are developmentally appropriate, educationally sound, and fun! Our commitment is to make teachers' lives simpler by providing them with the kinds of resource materials that will save time and enrich the classroom experience.

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