

Tuesday, April 10, 2007

U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez Unveils National Campaign to Inspire Invention in Children

The Advertising Council joined with the Department of Commerce's United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) and the National Inventors Hall of Fame Foundation (NIHFF) today to launch a national, multimedia public service advertising (PSA) campaign to engage a new generation of children in innovation. The campaign seeks to make inventing and developing new ideas part of American children's lives.

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Carlos M. Gutierrez unveiled the campaign at the National Press Club.

For generations, the United States has been a recognized global leader in technology and innovation. While the country represents only 5 percent of the world's population, it accounts for nearly one-third of the world's science and engineering researchers and 40 percent of all research and development, according to the Council on Competitiveness. However, with increased economic competition globally, it's widely recognized that the United States must take steps now to maintain its leadership. In particular, America must ensure we inspire future generations of innovators.

The new *Inspiring Invention* campaign, created in conjunction with ad agency Publicis & Hal Riney in San Francisco, aims to inspire children (specifically the "tweens," ages 8 to 11) to recognize how their imaginations can lead to the technological advances of the future. The campaign communicates that there is a role for every kind of unique curiosity and imaginative idea as it relates to invention. Ultimately, the goal is to motivate children to pursue inventing and innovating as part of their educations and, later, in their careers.

Secretary Gutierrez said, "In an innovation-driven economy, the key to our future success and competitiveness lies in making sure we are sharing America's culture of innovation with our young people. In doing so, we will prepare them to compete more effectively in the global marketplace and ensure that the United States maintains our global economic leadership."

Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO Jon Dudas added, "We see the *Inspiring Invention* campaign as a wonderful opportunity to show kids how fun and rewarding it can be to create. We hope that children who watch these ads will want to become more inventive; explore math, science and other creative fields; and then share their new ideas -- to continue America's legacy of innovation."

Developed with extensive research with inventors and children, the campaign includes new television, radio, outdoor and Web advertising that feature ordinary children creating inventions to solve everyday problems. The PSAs communicate to children that

“anything is possible” and encourage them to “keep thinking.” The ads direct audiences to visit a new comprehensive website, www.InventNow.org, to explore and discover their own innate inventiveness and curiosity. Designed by VPI (Visual Perspectives Internet), the site features interactive games and allows children to explore their inventive interests in space, sports, design and entertainment.

“Research conducted for our new campaign found that children are naturally curious and inventive, but they do not realize the impact of their creativity,” according to Peggy Conlon, President & CEO of the Ad Council. “We are proud to join with the United States Patent and Trademark Office and the National Inventors Hall of Fame Foundation on this wonderful effort to help children see that there are no limits to their creativity and imagination and that they can have a role in the technological advances of our future if they just ‘keep thinking.’”

The *Inspiring Invention* campaign is one of several educational initiatives in which the National Inventors Hall of Fame Foundation and the United States Patent and Trademark Office partner to encourage children to think inventively. Among these initiatives are the National Inventors Hall of Fame's Camp Invention and Club Invention programs, which are supported by the USPTO. Camp Invention, now in its 17th year, is a summer day camp that fosters creativity and inventive thinking skills that allow children to learn through hands-on activities, subject immersion and discovery. In 2007, more than 60,000 students will attend Camp Invention in 47 states. Club Invention is an after-school program directed by the Hall of Fame that extends scientific inquiry-based education to after-school sites.

National Inventors Hall of Fame Inductee and inventor of the modern microphone Dr. James West said, “This campaign relates directly to our mission of inspiring invention and creativity. It’s a prime opportunity for us to capture the attention of children and share with them the wonders of science and technology, inspiring them enough to become involved in life-long endeavors in these fields. Our future, and theirs, will be much richer because of it.”

“We’re honored to have been chosen to create a campaign with the important objective of engaging a generation of kids to make innovation and creativity an integral part of their lives,” said Karen Francis, CEO at Publicis & Hal Riney. “The work shows real kids creating and building incredibly innovative solutions to their problems. We hope that this campaign will help kids realize that they have the power and imagination to invent something totally new.”

The PSAs are being distributed to 28,000 media stations nationwide this week. Per the Ad Council’s donated media model, all of the new PSAs will air and run in advertising time and space donated by the media.

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Since 1790, the basic role of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has remained the same: to promote the progress of science and the useful arts by securing for limited times to inventors the exclusive right to their respective discoveries (Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution). Today, the USPTO is a federal agency in the Department of Commerce, headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia. Through the issuance of

patents, the USPTO encourages technological advancement by providing incentives to invent, invest in, and disclose new technology worldwide. Through the registration of trademarks, the agency assists businesses in protecting their investments, promoting goods and services, and safeguarding consumers against confusion and deception in the marketplace. By disseminating both patent and trademark information, the USPTO promotes an understanding of intellectual property protection and facilitates the development and sharing of new technologies worldwide.

National Inventors Hall of Fame Foundation

The not-for-profit National Inventors Hall of Fame Foundation is the premier organization in America dedicated to honoring and fostering creativity and invention. Each year a new class of inventors is inducted into the Hall of Fame in recognition of their patented inventions that make human, social, and economic progress possible. Founded in 1973 by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the National Council of Intellectual Property Law Association, the Hall's permanent home is Akron, Ohio, where the inventors in the Hall are honored and from where it administers its national programs, including Camp Invention[®], Club Invention[®], and the Collegiate Inventors Competition[®]. For more information, visit www.invent.org.

Publicis & Hal Riney

Hal Riney is a full-service creative boutique headquartered in San Francisco, wholly owned by Publicis Groupe, the world's fourth-largest communication group. Riney's advertising clients include well-known brands such as Sprint, WellPoint, Wrigley, Pinnacle Foods, and The American Red Cross Bay Area Chapter.

The Advertising Council

The Ad Council is a private, non-profit organization with a rich history of marshalling volunteer talent from the advertising and media industries to deliver critical messages to the American public. Having produced literally thousands of PSA campaigns addressing the most pressing social issues of the day, the Ad Council has effected, and continues to effect, tremendous positive change by raising awareness, inspiring action and saving lives. To learn more about the Ad Council and its campaigns, visit www.adcouncil.org.

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