FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Annie Grenier, (303) 522-3225

DENVER, Colo — OpenWorld Learning, a nonprofit that offers an after-school program to students in high-poverty schools, announced today that it will close at the end of the school year.

OpenWorld Learning (OWL) gives students in grades three through eight the opportunity to learn advanced technology and leadership skills, primarily by learning to code. OWL was founded in 2000 — seven years before the iPhone was introduced — to help close the digital divide that limited possibilities for many lower-income students.

“We are incredibly proud that, over nearly 20 years of service, we have helped thousands of students dream bigger dreams,” said OWL Board Chair Annie Grenier. “We know that students who participated consistently in OWL had better attendance and higher scores on state tests, and went on to pursue STEM courses in high school and college — and ultimately to lead more successful and fulfilling lives.”

Since 2000, OWL has engaged 9,544 students through programs in 49 schools and six community sites. The program also awarded free laptops to more than 1,300 students — often representing the first computer owned by that child and his or her family.

But the Denver metro area has changed dramatically in recent years. The high cost of housing has made the city core less affordable for lower-income families, and has made recruiting highly qualified teachers to work in the part-time program more difficult. At the same time, STEM is now a focus of many school offerings, after-school programs, and summer camps.

“OWL’s leaders and staff are proud to have been at the forefront of an explosion of interest in coding and in STEM among students throughout our community,” Grenier added. “We are grateful to the families, teachers, schools, donors, and supporters who made this success story possible.”