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## **UPSTART Program Going Strong in Second Year**

Salt Lake City, UT — February 3, 2011 – The [UPSTART](#) program, a computer-based preschool program funded by the state of Utah, is completing its second successful year, and is poised for success as it moves into its third.

Each child participating in UPSTART experiences an individualized reading, math, and science curriculum designed by [Waterford Institute™](#) with a specific focus on reading instruction. Originally started in 2008, the UPSTART program was organized to help Utah families prepare their children to succeed in kindergarten, and now serves participants across the state in all demographics.

The program takes place in the home, and if a family does not have a computer and access to the Internet UPSTART provides both, where needed. Additional help is provided through Waterford Institute's Learning Support Center, which maintains frequent contact with participants, and partners with parents to help them provide a strong learning foundation for their children.

In the past two years, over 3,000 preschoolers from across the state have participated in the UPSTART program. On average, these participants finish the program at a Kindergarten Advanced reading level, which means that, when compared to their peers across the country, UPSTART children enter kindergarten reading at the same level other children do in their last three months of kindergarten. Some participants are even completing the program at the First Grade reading level.

Cade Brenchley of Henefer, Utah, registered his daughter Alivia for UPSTART in early 2010 and said the program completely exceeded his expectations.

"Alivia's pre-kindergarten screener thought she could go straight to first grade," Brenchley said. "She was one of the few students, if not the only one, who could count to 100."

Brenchley also mentioned that Alivia amazed the members of her local church congregation when, before entering kindergarten, she read a talk by herself from the pulpit. "They couldn't believe it," Brenchley said. "UPSTART really helped Alivia."

Amira Chavez-Ramirez saw similar results with her son Joel, who registered for UPSTART in 2010. Upon entering kindergarten, Joel's teacher asked Ramirez what she had done to make her son so smart. She responded "I enrolled him in UPSTART!" Joel received perfect

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scores on his first report card, and she believes his scores are the direct result of his involvement in the UPSTART program.

Research performed by Dan Jones & Associates in 2010 found that 96% of UPSTART parents felt their children were more ready to enter kindergarten due to their participation in the program, and 98% said that they would recommend UPSTART to their friends and relatives.

Claudia Miner, Vice President of Development at Waterford Institute and Program Director of UPSTART, is pleased with the broad appeal of the UPSTART program and the difference it makes in the lives of so many children.

“In cities and small rural communities, in English- and Spanish-speaking families, in homes that have never had a computer before participating in UPSTART, we have seen the program work,” Miner said. “UPSTART has helped children master the critical skills they need to prepare them to learn when they begin kindergarten. We are proud to be working with great parents and caregivers to help Utah’s youngest learners succeed.”

Moving into year three, the UPSTART program is focused on expanding to help more Utah children develop the skills they need to prepare for kindergarten. Pre-registration is now open, and spaces are limited.

For more information on the UPSTART program and to pre-register, visit [www.utahupstart.org](http://www.utahupstart.org), or call 1-800-669-4533.

### **UPSTART Summary**

Utah Preparing Students Today for a Rewarding Tomorrow (UPSTART) is an in-home preschool program sponsored by the state of Utah that uses Waterford Institute’s award-winning software to prepare preschool-aged children for success in school. Through the program, children receive an individualized preschool curriculum of reading, math, and science, with a focus on reading instruction. Children and their parents or caregivers also receive special assistance through Waterford Institute’s Learning Support Center that maintains frequent contact through written materials, DVD and online training, e-mails, and telephone calls. This unique support system forms a partnership with parents to give them the tools that will ensure their children receive a strong learning foundation. As a preschool program unlike any other in the nation, UPSTART is preparing preschoolers for a lifetime of learning.

UPSTART is a preschool program provided by Waterford Institute, Inc. (<http://www.waterford.org>)—headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA—and funded by the state of Utah.

### **Available for Interview:**

Centerville, UT - Ms. Clara Lewis - 801.296.8999  
Eagle Mountain, UT - Ms. Diana Stacey - 801.830.5114  
Henefer, UT - Mr. Cade Brenchley - 435.770.8395

Herriman, UT - Ms. Kami Jones - 801.253.9553  
Ibapah, UT - Ms. Ana Lamb - 435.849.2360  
Kaysville, UT - Ms. Erin Charchenko - 801.499.0128  
Lindon, UT - Ms. Shalona Barney - 801.701.0307  
Magna, UT - Ms. Janette Hudson - 801.250.1500  
Magna, UT - Ms. Jennifer Madsen - 801.252.0979  
Mapleton, UT - Ms. Rosy Jameson - 801.491.7493  
Murray, UT - Ms. Amira Chavez-Ramirez - 801.746.9013 (Spanish speaking)  
Salt Lake City, UT - Ms. Andrea Lugo - 801.967.2695  
St. George, UT - Ms. Kami Cuff - 435.668.7959  
West Jordan, UT - Ms. Joy Palmer - 801.703.5842

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