



Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence
John Douglas Harris
Biography

John Harris currently teaches at Lochiel U-Connect Education Centre in Langley.

Through the use of technology, John has made a significant positive impact on the lives of students, working diligently to contribute to their success. For example, John has integrated robotics into various curriculum strands. His students have created many different types of robots, including underwater ROVs, which have won many awards such as NASA's "Excellence in Design" award at the 2005 MATE-NASA ROV competition at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. Similarly, over the past ten years his student teams of software developers have also developed dozens of highly interactive online educational applications such as the "Virtual Salmon Dissector." Not only are they widely used by many schools, but they also have won many national and international awards. Examples include first place in the 2003 ChildNet competition in the "schools category" held at the Museum of Science in London, England and two separate top four placements at the international Thinkquest web building competition.

Together, these successes have generated the equivalent of well over \$200 000 in prizes and scholarships for his students. Online resources created by him and his students have also been recommended and reviewed by such diverse international media as USA Today and the BBC and are included as one of 76 select sites chosen by Google for their open directory "schools - arithmetic" category and one of 57 sites chosen by "Yahoo Kids" for their "School Bell-math-puzzles and games" category.

John also utilizes innovative methods to improve the achievement of his students. In 1997 he started Uconnect, a Langley School District program for home learners that blends state-of-the-art online instruction with face-to-face classes; Uconnect has evolved into a K-9 program with an average enrollment of just under 200 students with its own building. Also, he is currently developing and utilizing a wide variety of 3-D multiple user virtual environment simulations for science and social studies classes.

John also contributes to the professional development of colleagues, delivering an average of six workshops a year provincially and sometimes internationally on the integration of technology into the classroom learning.