For Release: Immediate
Contact: Dan Curran of Curran Public Relations (770-658-9586)

Professionals Who Make Georgia's Highly Skilled Workforce a Reality Honored by State
Governor Nathan Deal Declares Dec. 5-9, 2011 as Employee Learning Week in Georgia

(ATLANTA, Ga.) – December 5, 2011 –Governor Nathan Deal is recognizing the contributions of professionals who make the state's highly skilled workforce a reality and declaring December 5-9, 2011 as Employee Learning Week in the state of Georgia. The Greater Atlanta Chapter of the American Society for Training & Development coordinated the observance as part of its efforts to promote awareness of workplace learning and performance.

"Businesses and organizations that are committed to creating a highly skilled workforce recognize the competitive advantage of employee education as skilled employees improve performance and productivity," according to the proclamation signed by Governor Deal. "Continued employee learning develops individual and organizational knowledge and expertise."

"The members of the American Society for Training & Development's Greater Atlanta Chapter play a vital role in Georgia's economic success and have a very real impact both on organizations and the lives of their employees," said Mark Myette, president of the 1,000 member Greater Atlanta Chapter of ASTD. "We are honored to receive this recognition and appreciate Governor Deal's support of our efforts to recognize a year-long commitment by organizations to improve human performance and productivity."

Examples of workplace learning and its impact include:

- The Home Depot's (Marietta, Ga.) Home Depot University (HDU) and Distance Learning programs enable Store Support Center in Atlanta to connect with associates and leaders in stores, supply chain, and merchandising execution teams and ensure a consistent message across the enterprise. To date, the Distance Learning program has trained over 20,000 hourly associates located across the U.S., Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The company is realizing many gains, such as improving store controlled operation profit, reducing voluntary turnover, and decreasing the number of internal help calls.

- LocumTenens.com (Alpharetta, Ga.), a physician staffing company, found that new hires – who may not have a healthcare background – could be productive within their first week or even their first day thanks to the company's hands-on training program. From their first week, trainees are actively calling prospects and generating leads and contributing to the company's revenue. The training program has also resulted in the company having a very high retention rate, which enables it to develop strong, long-term relationships with its customers.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Human Capital Planning Branch (Atlanta, Ga.) reviewed employee surveys and found a strong correlation between effective manager-employee communication and employee satisfaction scores. As a result of their Expanding Your Work Satisfaction and Effectiveness and Taking Time to Talk workshops, which have been attended by over 700 people, communication and work satisfaction rates have improved throughout the agency.

- AGCO (Duluth, Ga.), a worldwide manufacturer and distributor of agricultural equipment, is committed to providing high-tech solutions for professional farmers feeding the world. In 2011, it opened the AGCO Global Learning Center, a 19,500 sq. ft. facility that is home to AGCO Academy and AGCO University. Trainings have given participants the skills to improve the profitability and productivity of their individual dealerships and affiliated service departments.

- The Cabot Corporation (Alpharetta, Ga.), a global specialty chemical and performance materials company, conducted workshops this year to introduce employees to a renewed set of corporate values. Trainings helped employees understand corporate policy, how the values guided day-to-day work life and better equipped them to "live" the values by closely aligning daily decisions and work behaviors with them.

- The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia made a commitment to develop a leadership culture and engage its 41,000 employee workforce in process improvements. Through an annual six-day Executive Leadership Institute and the system's Professional Development Consortium, the system is able to support learning and professional development among its 35 colleges and universities by fostering collaboration, sharing development resources, and funding the implementation of best practices.

##

About Us

Established in 1955, the Greater Atlanta Chapter of the American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) is a regional, non-profit association committed to providing workplace performance professionals with a forum for the exchange of professional development opportunities and resources as they strive to improve workplace learning and performance. The Greater Atlanta Chapter is one of the country's largest in the world's largest association dedicated to serving workplace learning and performance professionals. To learn more visit astdatlanta.org.