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BILL SNYDER, CHAIR

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**Kansas Mentors Gold Star program member
receives international recognition**

Blue Valley CAPS program recognized for CAPS Accelerator

TOPEKA, Kan.—The national spotlight is shining on Blue Valley’s Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) program. CAPS was awarded the National Business Incubation Association’s (NBIA) 2013 Incubator Innovation Award for the CAPS Incubator program.

“To be recognized on an international level is truly an honor,” said Donna Deeds, Executive Director of CAPS.

The CAPS Incubator program, CAPS Accelerator, is designed for entrepreneurial-minded students seeking high-tech resources and multi-talented teams to innovate and accelerate their ideas. The program provides access to industry mentors, networking and collaboration opportunities, and assistance with prototyping and proof of concept, leading to the creation of successful businesses that commercialize the entrepreneurial students’ products or services.

“This award validates the innovative education experience our community desires,” said Tony Thill, Blue Valley Board of Education President. “The Board of Education is thrilled with this recognition for CAPS and excited to continue the development of the visionary CAPS program and share this model with others across the nation and internationally.”

The National Business Incubation Association is the world's leading organization advancing business incubation and entrepreneurship. Each year, the NBIA Incubation Awards honor the business incubation programs, graduates and client companies that exemplify the best of the industry.

“It is exciting for the CAPS program to be recognized on the same level as many innovative businesses and post-secondary institutions across the county,” said Tom Trigg, Superintendent.

CAPS joined the Kansas Mentors Gold Star program family in January of this year. The Gold Star program was developed in an effort to provide a safe and effective mentoring environment for the youth of Kansas. This program recognizes mentoring partners across the state who have committed to maintaining high standards and best practices to ensure a quality mentoring experience.

“We are thrilled that CAPS received this prestigious award. What a fantastic testament to the good work they are doing! They have a great model, and work hard to provide a quality mentoring environment for the youth in their programs,” said Cheri Faunce, Director of Kansas Mentors.

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