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FREE EDUCATION

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Saylor Foundation Releases Three Openly Licensed, College-Level Textbooks

Open Education Non-Profit Licenses College Textbooks Under CC-BY For Use By Educators and Students Worldwide

Washington, D.C. – The Saylor Foundation (http://www.saylor.org) is excited to announce today that it has released three openly licensed, college-level textbooks as part of its Open Textbook Challenge (OTC). These texts are hosted on www.saylor.org and are now available for immediate use by students and educators around the globe.

Titles added to Saylor.org's repertoire include: *Elementary Linear Algebra*; *Linear Algebra*; and *Computer Networking: Principles, Protocols and Practice*.

"Each year, millions of students are unable to obtain an education due to financial impediments," said Alana Harrington, Director of the Saylor Foundation. "By releasing openly-licensed textbooks that also align with the free courses we've made available on Saylor.org, we aim to help alleviate the financial stress that students face when having to purchase these books as well as provide more students with access to quality higher educational resources that otherwise might not be available to them."

By compiling college-level courseware that is freely available to anyone with Internet access, the Saylor Foundation provides an option for those individuals who seek a higher education, yet face monetary or geographical barriers. The OTC is one of the Saylor Foundation's efforts to diminish this accessibility gap by addressing the challenge of rising textbook costs. In opening up these textbooks to the world, the authors can positively impact worldwide student learning.

"When looking at the evolution of research, studies show that publicly available papers have a higher impact than papers that are not publicly available," said Dr. Olivier Bonaventure, author of *Computer Networking: Principles, Protocols and Practice*. "The same will be true for educational material. Based on my experience, the utilization of an online resource with the students has had a very positive impact on the students by allowing them to easily explore the textbook topic further with hypertext links to various references."

Furthermore, these texts will not only drive down costs for students, who spend an average of $1,000 on textbooks per year, according to the College Board, but like other open textbooks, they can also assist educators in content creation.

"These textbooks could save students lots of money," said Dr. Kenneth Kuttler, author of two accepted textbooks, *Elementary Linear Algebra* and *Linear Algebra*. "But, another advantage of books in this form is that they are easy to improve. I think there is no such thing as a perfect book, only convergence toward perfection which is achieved more easily with this format than with the traditional approach of multiple editions."

"Open textbooks will have a positive impact on most students but also to teachers who will be able to contribute to existing open textbooks and improve them over the years," said Bonaventure.

The authors received $20,000 for each of their accepted entries. As part of the on-going Open Textbook Challenge, the Saylor Foundation is offering $20,000 to each college textbook author or professor who agrees to openly license his or her work under a CC BY 3.0 license. Submitted texts that pass the Foundation's peer review process and align with one of the eligible courses on Saylor.org will be entitled to the $20,000 prize, and will be made freely available via Saylor.org. More information about this challenge can be found at www.saylor.org/otc.

About the Textbooks
Dr. Kenneth Kuttler, a professor at Brigham Young University, wrote both *Elementary Linear Algebra* and *Linear Algebra* texts for his students' use at BYU. Both texts have been available online for some time, but each was previously held under a copyright. According to the introduction of *Elementary Linear Algebra*, "this is intended to be a first course in linear algebra for student who are sophomores or juniors who have had a course in one variable calculus and a reasonable background in college algebra." This text will be used as part of Saylor.org's MA211: Linear Algebra course.

Dr. Kuttler's second entry, *Linear Algebra*, will be used in Saylor.org's MA212: Linear Algebra II course. According to the preface of the text: "This is a book on linear algebra and matrix theory. While it is self-contained, it will work best for those who have already had some exposure to linear algebra. It is also assumed that the reader has had calculus. Some optional topics require more analysis than this, however."

Our third text, *Computer Networking: Principles, Protocols and Practice* was written and submitted by Dr. Olivier Bonaventure. Dr. Bonaventure is a Professor at the Université catholique de Louvain (UCL) in Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium. He also serves as the Education Director of ACM SIGCOMM. *Computer Networking* has already been used by several universities around the world, including UCL, and will be used as part of Saylor.org's CS402: Local Area Networks.

About the Saylor Foundation
The Saylor Foundation (under its legal name, The Constitution Foundation) is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. The Foundation was established in 1999 by Michael J. Saylor, the Chairman, CEO and President of the business intelligence company MicroStrategy. Mr. Saylor serves as the Foundation's sole trustee.

The Foundation's focus since 2008 has been its Free Education Initiative, through which it is using technology to drive down the cost of education to zero. Saylor.org serves as a zero-cost alternative for individuals who lack the resources to attend traditional brick-and-mortar institutions and as a complement to willing mainstream education providers. Saylor expects free, self-paced, automated online learning opportunities to motivate people to pursue personal growth and career ambitions as well as to lead to institutional change among education providers everywhere.

More information about the Saylor Foundation is available at www.saylor.org.

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