Employment Development Department
State of California

N E W S R E L E A S E

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Directory and Toll-free Phone Line Links Californians to 166,500 Free Technology Training Vouchers

SACRAMENTO – Californians now have a fast and easy way to start on the road to new and rewarding careers in technology: a newly developed directory and toll-free phone number linking them to sites where 166,500 free Microsoft Elevate America training vouchers are available.

The state has developed a list of all One-Stop Career Centers designated by Local Workforce Investment Boards as those in charge of distributing the vouchers to customers most in need. The directory can be accessed through the "Free Microsoft training and certification" link on the front page News and Announcements section of the Employment Development Department's Web site at www.edd.ca.gov, or by calling the new temporary toll-free line at 1-888-482-7648.

"Californians interested in this innovative and exciting public-private partnership can now easily connect with the participating offices in their local area," said Victoria Bradshaw, Secretary of the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency. "We have set up this special directory and phone line to provide quick access to Microsoft's Elevate America, a program that will enable 166,500 Californians to enhance their technology skills and gain a competitive edge in the job market."

The referral line will be available to the public from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays when state offices are open.

The Elevate America program, announced earlier this month by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, includes 92,500 vouchers for courses ranging from basic technology literacy to intermediate and advanced level technology skills training, and 74,000 vouchers for Microsoft Business Certification Exams, which are designed to enable a user to pursue a no-cost exam to become certified in one Microsoft program, such as Excel, Word or Outlook.

More information on the Elevate America training vouchers program is available at www.edd.ca.gov through the "Free Microsoft training and certification" link in the News and Announcements section. Vouchers will be available to citizens across the state on a first-come, first-served basis. Individuals must activate their vouchers for training and complete certification exams within a 90-day period.

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For news media inquiries only, contact the California Employment Development Department (EDD) Communications Office, at (916) 654-9029. TTY users, please call the California Relay Service at 711.