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## Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration Awarded First-Place Gold for Innovation in Distance Learning from USDLA, the Leader in Distance and Digital Learning Education

**North Mankato, Minn.** (May 25, 2022) — The [Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration \(CILC\)](#), a nonprofit dedicated to breaking down educational barriers through virtual, interactive learning, announced today it has been named by the [United States Distance Learning Association](#), known globally as USDLA, as a Gold winner for Innovation in Distance Learning in the Corporate category.

Each year, USDLA recognizes innovators and leaders within the distance/digital learning industry as part of its International Award program. These highly coveted awards are presented annually to organizations and individuals who compete across several categories of excellence. The [USDLA International Distance Learning Awards](#) are created to acknowledge major accomplishments in distance learning and to highlight those distance learning instructors, programs, and professionals who have achieved and demonstrated extraordinary achievements through the use of online learning techniques, innovation, and video delivery technologies globally.

“USDLA sets the standard for international distance learning education, and CILC is honored to receive such a prestigious award,” said Jan Zanetis, managing director, Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration. “CILC has worked hard over the last year to ensure our nonprofit is laser focused on narrowing opportunity gaps for students by providing low-to-no-cost programs for families and classrooms, creating opportunities for children in social, cultural, and interactive learning experiences that would otherwise be limited for underserved students.”

“The International Award program continues to provide prestigious recognition for educational influencers around the world,” says Dr. Arletha McSwain, president of USDLA. “These award winners are truly leaders in the distance/digital learning industry and their work in support of pedagogy is unsurpassed.”

CILC programs offer students anywhere the ability to take virtual field trips to museums and cultural and historic institutions around the world – creating an important bridge for underserved students who might otherwise never have exposure to such environments, and helping children to better connect to lessons. [Studies](#) show that virtual field trips are as [impactful for students](#) as in-person field trips, and years of research have found that field trips positively contribute to the development of students by strengthening critical thinking skills, increasing historical empathy, displaying higher levels of tolerance, and possessing a greater taste for consuming art and culture.

### **About The United States Distance Learning Association**

The United States Distance Learning Association was founded in 1987 and based on the premise of creating a powerful alliance to meet the burgeoning education and training needs of learning communities via new concepts of the fusion of communication technologies with learning in broad multidiscipline applications. We were the first nonprofit distance learning association in the United States to support distance learning research, development, and praxis across the complete arena of education, training, and communications. The learning communities that the USDLA addresses are: pre-K/12, higher education, continuing education, corporate training, military and government training, home schooling, and telehealth. Our mission is to support the development and application of digital and distance learning by focusing on legislation impacting the community and constituencies.

### **About The Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration**

The Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to connecting young minds to unique and diverse content, breaking down educational access barriers, and narrowing the opportunity gap for underserved communities. Founded in 1994, CILC has been a leader in the interactive virtual learning space before “remote learning” and “virtual experiences” were catchphrases. Over the years, CILC has developed hundreds of partnerships with organizations including museums, zoos, and science and performing art centers and delivered 113,000 global programs to 3.5 million students worldwide. CILC is committed to changing lives by making learning accessible, regardless of physical location or financial means. For more information about CILC, please visit [Discover.CILC.org](http://Discover.CILC.org).

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