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ETS NEWS

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The TOEIC® Program Celebrates 30 Years of Measuring Global Workplace English

Test that began with 3,000 test takers now administers more than 5 million tests per year.

Princeton, N.J. (Dec. 17, 2009) – Thirty years ago this December, an official from Japan’s World Economic Information Service, Mr. Yasuo Kitaoka, approached Educational Testing Service (ETS) about designing an English test that he envisioned would become the international standard for measuring global workplace English. This vision was realized as the TOEIC® Test (Test of English for International Communication™). From a modest start in 1979 with about 3,000 test takers, more than 5 million TOEIC tests were administered in 2009. The TOEIC test is used by over 9,000 businesses and organizations in more than 90 countries worldwide.

Kitaoka’s goal was the promotion of global communication through English. He spoke about his vision with ETS, the world-renowned nonprofit test development organization. At the time, ETS was already administering the TOEFL® Test (Test of English as a Foreign Language™) to assess English ability in academic settings. Today, the TOEFL test is taken annually by nearly a million people worldwide wishing to pursue higher education degrees at primarily English-speaking universities.

“The task of developing a global workplace English test was a challenging one,” explains Dr. Philip Tabbiner, Senior Vice-President and General Manager, K-12, Business Development, Partnerships and Global. “Once approved, however, the TOEIC test-development project

generated much excitement at ETS. While the TOEFL test was developed to measure academic English, the TOEIC test was developed to focus on English-language assessment of individuals for use in the workplace all over the world, particularly in areas where English is not the native language. The challenge was that the TOEIC testing population was far more heterogeneous, and the new test needed to cover a wider range of abilities. ETS was up to the challenge, though, and continues to be the innovative leader in English-language assessment."

The TOEIC test, which is administered around the globe, is administered in Japan by the Institute for International Business Communication (IIBC). The Institute is a nonprofit organization that operates under the auspices of the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry to promote internationalization for individuals and companies. Since its founding, IIBC has been involved in a diverse range of activities with a global perspective, in collaboration with various organizations inside and outside Japan, to fulfill its mission of promoting effective communication in the global business environment.

"We are very pleased to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the TOEIC test," notes Naotomi Umezawa, Managing Director of IIBC. "The test has achieved tremendous popularity in Japan because of its quality and reliability. Also, because of the quality, the test has had a positive influence on the way Japanese people study English. We truly appreciate the support that ETS has been extending to us for the past 30 years."

Nonprofit ETS, which developed and owns the TOEIC test, coordinates test development, scoring and related research. The TOEIC family of assessments is comprised of the TOEIC® Listening and Reading test, the TOEIC® Speaking and Writing tests and the TOEIC *Bridge*™ test. These tests can be used individually or in combination. When used to assess all four English communication skills, the TOEIC tests provide an accurate measure of workplace English proficiency.

About ETS

At nonprofit ETS, we advance quality and equity in education for people worldwide by creating assessments based on rigorous research. ETS serves individuals, educational institutions and government agencies by providing customized solutions for teacher certification, English-language learning, and elementary, secondary and post-secondary education, as well as conducting education research, analysis and policy studies. Founded in 1947, ETS develops, administers and scores more than 50 million tests annually — including the TOEFL® and

TOEIC® tests, the GRE® test and *The Praxis Series*™ assessments — in more than 180 countries, at over 9,000 locations worldwide.

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