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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****WINSTON-SALEM HOME OF PRESCHOOL FOREIGN LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM***

**April 2, 2010** – Winston Salem’s vibrant international community has over the last year been the home to World Languages for Children LLC, a child-centered and age-appropriate language immersion program in Spanish and Chinese for ages two through nine. Klarisa Cizmek, program founder and director, bases her concept on fun, language immersion, multiculturalism and a beginning at an early age.

Cizmek was motivated to create World Languages for Children for reasons both personal and cultural. Growing up in Croatia, she started to learn English at age four. Today she is multilingual, has a MA in English and has taught the subject at the college level. Her family speaks Croatian at home and her three and six-year-old children are bilingual, currently learning Spanish as their third language. After moving to Winston-Salem, where there is a large Hispanic community, she realized it would be beneficial for her children to learn Spanish. “My parents thought English was important for me,” said Cizmek, who considers her English fluency invaluable. “In the same way, Spanish is important for my children.”

Just over a year ago Cizmek’s children both attended Fairview Moravian Preschool, and while both the children and Cizmek loved their preschool, the latter felt the only missing piece was quality foreign language instruction. She then drew on her experience as foreign language instructor, as well as her understanding of the child’s view of the world and created World Languages for Children LLC. The program piloted at Fairview Moravian Preschool during the 2008/2009 school year with great success. In fall 2009 Spanish classes began in St. Paul’s preschool in Winston Salem downtown. “We have been offering Spanish classes to our 3- and 4-year-olds as an extra-curricular class during the 2009/10 school year,” said Judy Ingram, director of the preschool. “I have had parents tell me that their children are asking about the Spanish words for many things at home, and they have been pleased with their children’s progress in learning a new language.” The classes are open both to open public and to the children in St. Paul’s preschool.

Cizmek’s passion to bring early childhood foreign language instruction to this community is fueled by research supporting her views. According to the North Carolina Department of Commerce, there are over 40 international companies registered in the state, bringing in nearly \$30 billion dollars, making it the 9<sup>th</sup> largest international presence in the country. “In the international world of today and tomorrow, it would be so beneficial for the children to have this powerful asset,” said Cizmek. The earlier the better. Studies show that children learn languages more efficiently than adults, both neurologically and physiologically. In addition, language learning also correlates with higher academic achievement on standardized tests.

Links to these studies, as well as much more information about World Languages for Children, can be found at [www.worldlanguagesforchildren.com](http://www.worldlanguagesforchildren.com) or by calling Klarisa Cizmek at (336) 403 8233. ###