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MEDIA CONTACT:

Jennifer Aalgaard, Communications Manager

Getting Smart

206-291-7190

jennifer@gettingsmart.com

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It's Time to Build Cities That Work for Everyone

New Book By Author Tom Vander Ark Provides

7 Keys to Education & Employment

SEATTLE, WA - September 23, 2014 - Released today by Getting Smart, “Smart Cities That Work for Everyone: 7 Keys to Education & Employment” authored by Tom Vander Ark, discusses the importance learning has on the health of cities and provides a framework for action and tools for implementation.

“Learning is no longer just the job of education. Learning is everyone’s job; families, neighborhoods, schools and cities,” said Tom Vander Ark. “The term *smart cities* has come to refer to effective tools and practices for livable communities: livability, workability and sustainability. This book shows that learnability should be added to the equation.”

A two year investigation, the [Smart Cities](#) project was launched to investigate the civic formula required to dramatically boost learning outcomes and employability. The ability for an economy to grow over time - and its ability to innovate - is strongly tied to quality education provided for everyone - early learning to adult training. Skills and intellectual capital are becoming increasingly important in a modern economy, and schools play a key role in the development of these valuable skills.

“It is critical to understand the importance of good schools to the health of cities,” said, Kevin Johnson, Mayor of Sacramento, CA. “If you want to reduce crime and poverty, you need a good education system—it’s the great equalizer, it’s the passport, it’s the civil

rights issue of our time.”

Hundreds of people contributed to this project, 60 of which wrote pieces as a part of the Smart Cities blog series on GettingSmart.com. Through the research a clear, although not simple premise emerged as seven keys to smart cities:

- Innovation Mindset
- Sustained Leadership
- Talent Development
- Collective Impact
- Aligned Investment
- New Tools and Schools, and
- Advocacy and Policy

“When I was elected mayor of the District of Columbia in 2007, test scores were among the lowest in the country,” said Adrian Fenty, former Mayor of Washington D.C. “On my first day in office, we introduced legislation to take control of our public schools. It was a bold idea and part of a hands-on approach to city government and while they caused controversy they quickly boosted academic results.”

The book is intended to serve as an outline for regional action and investment, a guide for philanthropic and venture investment, a blueprint for civic entrepreneurs and Edupreneurs, and a signal to educators of where the sector is headed.

“Smart Cities that Work for Everyone: 7 Keys to Education & Employment” can be purchased by visiting the [Getting Smart](http://GettingSmart.com) website.

Join the conversation on Twitter with [#SmartCities](https://twitter.com/SmartCities) and follow [@TVanderArk](https://twitter.com/TVanderArk) and [@Getting Smart](https://twitter.com/GettingSmart) for more.

Sample Tweets:

Get the latest book from @TVanderArk #SmartCities that Work for Everyone.
<http://bit.ly/1rZUH4h>

#SmartCities that Work for Everyone by @TVanderArk promotes civic & community involvement in education <http://bit.ly/1rZUH4h>

“Healthy communities start with a robust education system” - @TVanderArk in new book #SmartCities that Work for Everyone <http://bit.ly/1rZUH4h>

About Tom Vander Ark

Tom Vander Ark is author of “Getting Smart: How Digital Learning is Changing the World” and “Smart Cities That Work for Everyone: 7 Keys to Education & Employment”. He is CEO of Getting Smart, an education advocacy firm and a partner at Learn Capital an education venture fund. Tom advocates for innovations that customize and motivate learning and extend access. Previously he served as President of the X PRIZE Foundation and was the first Executive Director of Education for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Tom served as a public school superintendent in Washington State and has extensive private sector experience. Tom is Treasurer for the International Association for K-12 Online Learning ([iNACOL](#)), chair of Charter Board Partners, and serves on several other boards.

About Getting Smart

[Getting Smart®](#) is an education advocacy firm passionate about innovations in learning. We help education organizations construct cohesive and forward-thinking strategies for branding, awareness, advancement and communication, and public and media relations. We are advocates for better K-12 education as well as early, post-secondary and informal learning opportunities for all students. We attempt to accelerate and improve the shift to digital learning. On [GettingSmart.com](#) we cover important events, trends, products, books and reports. Follow Getting Smart on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).