



Nelnet forms relationship with non-profit Rhode Island Student Loan Authority

(Lincoln, NE) - Today, Nelnet, Inc. (NYSE: NNI) announced the formation of a strategic relationship with Rhode Island Student Loan Authority (RISLA), a non-profit state authority headquartered in Warwick, Rhode Island. The venture, which facilitates the sale of a portion of RISLA's existing and future student loan portfolio, is a unique arrangement between a for-profit student loan company and a quasi-state agency.

Proceeds from the loan portfolio sale will be directed to education-related programs within the state, supporting Rhode Island's continued efforts to aid needy students. As a part of the transaction, an additional \$500,000 in scholarships for Rhode Island students will be funded directly by Nelnet.

"Nelnet has provided student loan servicing to RISLA for many years. Through that time we've had the opportunity to become familiar with the quality programs they provide to the state's schools and students," commented Steve Butterfield, Nelnet Vice Chairman and Co-CEO. "By combining RISLA's strong position as an educational lender and Nelnet's loan servicing longevity and expertise, we hope to continue both organizations' vision of making educational dreams possible for Rhode Island students."

Through the agreement, three RISLA employees will remain with the organization, and Nelnet will assume the employment of the remaining 22. If successful, Nelnet may increase employment in Rhode Island. Nelnet will also assume the rights to the agency's student loan origination platform. RISLA will maintain its Warwick headquarters and Executive Director Charles Kelley will continue to lead the management team.

"This relationship was the right thing to do for Rhode Island's students and educational programs," stated Charles Kelley, Executive Director of RISLA. "The cost savings provided by this relationship will help make access to higher education more affordable for Rhode Island students, a benefit needed within our state and throughout the U.S."

A March date has been set for the loan portfolio transaction between the two organizations.

Nelnet is one of the leading educational finance companies in the United States and is focused on providing quality student loan products and services to students and schools nationwide. With over \$11 billion in total assets, Nelnet originates in excess of \$2 billion for itself and its service partners annually, services more than \$18 billion in student loans, and provides servicing software for an additional \$27 billion in student loans. Nelnet ranks among the nation's leaders in terms of total student loan assets.

Nelnet offers a broad range of student loan and financial services and technology-based products, including student loan origination and lending, guarantee servicing, and a suite of software solutions. Our products are designed to simplify the student loan process by automating financial aid delivery, loan processing, and funds disbursement. Our services help to facilitate and streamline education finance for all involved in the industry, including student and parent borrowers, lenders, financial aid officers, guaranty agencies, governmental agencies, servicers, and the capital markets. Additional information is available at www.nelnet.net.

The Rhode Island Student Loan Authority (RISLA), a non-profit State authority, provides affordable higher education loans. Since 1981, the Authority has provided over 200,000 loans, helping 100,000 students to achieve the education that they deserve. Additional information regarding RISLA is available at www.risla.org.

Information contained in this press release, other than historical information, may be considered forward-looking in nature and is subject to various risks, uncertainties, and assumptions. Should one or more of these risks or uncertainties materialize, or should underlying assumptions prove incorrect, actual results may vary materially from those anticipated, estimated, or expected. Among the key factors that may have a direct bearing on Nelnet's operating results, performance, or financial condition are changes in terms of student loans and the educational credit marketplace, changes in the demand for educational financing or in financing preferences of educational institutions, students and their families, or changes in the general interest rate environment and in the securitization markets for education loans.