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NEWS RELEASE

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PNC ANNOUNCES $250,000 FOR NEW PRESCHOOL SCIENCE INITIATIVE IN NORTHERN ALABAMA

Childcare Resources, Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity, and McWane Science Center to Offer Field Trips, Teacher Training

Birmingham, Ala., Sept. 21, 2012 – Three local nonprofit organizations will share a $250,000 grant from the PNC Foundation to boost science skills for underserved preschoolers in Jefferson County.

The new Greater Birmingham Science initiative leverages the expertise of Childcare Resources, the Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity (JCCEO) and McWane Science Center, which will use the funds to offer family engagement activities and provide teachers with professional development opportunities for early science learning.

"This PNC Foundation grant will help us create a sustainable approach to engage young children, their parents and our teachers in science learning," said Gayle Cunningham, with JCCEO.

Under the two-year project, approximately 800 Head Start students will benefit from enhanced science activities in their classrooms, and their families will receive hands-on learning resources, including take-home science kits, field trips and complimentary family memberships to McWane Science Center, and other resources. JCCEO and Childcare Resource will provide about 50 Head Start teachers with training to improve teacher confidence and skills in preschool science instruction.

"PNC recognizes the role kindergarten readiness plays in the well-being of local children, their families and ultimately, our economy," said Jim Hansen, PNC regional president for Northern Alabama, speaking on behalf of The PNC Foundation. "By preparing our youngest citizens for educational success, we help build a solid foundation for the future of this region."

The grant marks the local launch of *PNC Grow Up Great*, a $350 million, multi-year, bilingual initiative that began in 2004 to improve early childhood education for children from birth to age 5. To date, the program has served more than 1.5 million preschoolers and PNC employees have recorded more than 280,000 hours through a progressive policy that permits 40 hours a year of paid time off for volunteerism.

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In addition, PNC will donate 1,800 *"Happy, Healthy, Ready for School – Math Is Everywhere"* activity kits to supplement mathematics learning for participating children. Created by Sesame Workshop as part of a continuing partnership with PNC, the bilingual, multimedia kits include a guide for parents and caregivers, a children's book, along with an original *Sesame Street™* DVD. *Math Is Everywhere* materials are available for free at all PNC Bank branches, pncgrowupgreat.com, and sesamestreet.org/math.

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group (NYSE:PNC), actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it has a significant presence. The foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes the arts and culture. Through Grow Up Great, its signature cause that began in 2004, PNC has created a $350 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life. For more information, please visit www.pncgrowupgreat.com and www.youtube.com/PNC or follow *@PNCGrowUpGreat* on Twitter.

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