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Kalamazoo County Ready 4s Awarded \$150,000 in Grants from PNC Foundation to Develop High-Quality Pre-Kindergarten Program

Kalamazoo, MI, November 26, 2012 – Kalamazoo County Ready 4s (KC Ready 4s) has been awarded a total of \$150,000 in grants over a four-year period from the PNC Foundation to assist in the development of a county-wide system to provide high-quality pre-kindergarten for every Kalamazoo County four-year old.

PNC provided the funding in support of *Grow Up Great*, its \$350 million multi-year bilingual program in early childhood education.

KC Ready 4s' goal to improve kindergarten readiness throughout the county is being achieved by focusing on high-quality expectations, increasing access for all families, improving diversity in the classrooms, and maximizing local resources.

"We are very grateful to PNC for their initial investment as well as their continued support as we work to provide high-quality pre-kindergarten for our earliest learners. **A child is only four once** . . . and it is our goal to ensure that every four-year old in the county has the means to attend pre-kindergarten," said Sandy Standish, KC Ready 4s' Executive Director.

The series of grants from the PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC), will allow KC Ready 4s to move one step closer in developing a sustainable pre-kindergarten system for the county. Each year, the number of enrolled children will continue to increase as well as the number of providers who reach high-quality. Through this work, barriers that prohibit pre-kindergarten participation will be eliminated.

"KC Ready 4s' mission to provide access to high-quality pre-kindergarten is an important goal that aligns well with PNC's signature philanthropic initiative, PNC Grow Up Great," said PNC Western Michigan Regional President Sean Welsh. "PNC recognizes the critical role that access to high quality early childhood education plays in the lives of area children, their families and ultimately, our economy."

About the Organizations

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.

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