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**SESAME STREET'S ELMO HELPS TO PRESENT PNC'S \$420,000 GRANT TO BROWARD SCHOOLS, PALM BEACH STATE COLLEGE AND OTHERS FOR PRE-K STEAM EDUCATION**

FT. LAUDERDALE, Fla., Jan. 28, 2016 — Home to more than one million children under the age 5, Florida's early learning education and school readiness programs are essential to prepare our youth to compete in a world economy.

That is why the PNC Foundation has awarded a \$420,000 grant to create Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) education resources for hundreds of pre-k students, their families and early childhood educators in communities throughout Broward and Palm Beach counties.

The funds will be shared over the next two years between the Broward and Palm Beach County Public Schools and their respective Education Foundations, Palm Beach State College, the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium and the Young at Art Children's Museum. Sesame Street's Walkaround Elmo and a dozen children from Lauderdale Manors Early Learning Center sang songs and played interactive games to conclude the grant ceremony.

"We are honored to receive the PNC Grow Up Great grant," said Broward County Public Schools Superintendent Robert W. Runcie. "Providing our youngest learners with the educational programs and resources they need to be successful in kindergarten and beyond, is essential. The Grow Up Great grant supports our District's commitment to offering high-quality early education options for children and families."

Today's grant is an extension of the \$800,000 grant awarded to several of these organizations in 2012.

Through this STEAM initiative, these organizations will expand the dual-county project to include the early childhood education public sector. While much of the work will focus on a broader group of early childhood professionals from the public school sector and the young children they serve.

"In today's growing global economy, students will need to excel in math, science and the arts to compete internationally as engineers, scientists, physicians, and creative entrepreneurs," said Cressman Bronson, regional president of PNC Bank speaking on behalf of the Foundation. "Research shows that the U.S. placed 27th out of 34 countries in math performance and 20th in science performance. Our support of science and arts education for area preschoolers will not only help them succeed in school but will broaden their opportunities for social and economic mobility, which will ultimately help build a solid foundation for the future of this region."

This marks the first time that both county school districts work together to regionally make an impact on early childhood STEAM education.

### **Highlights of Grants**

The \$420,000 grant from The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group (NYSE: PNC), extends *PNC Grow Up Great* in South Florida. The activities planned by the grant recipients include:

- The design and development of 4-6 new STEAM exhibits for use at two new STEAM Fairs at the School District sites
- Several fieldtrips to museums and other learning organizations
- Train VPK teachers through technical resources and online training webinars
- The college's trainers will develop and teach STEAM (Science, Technology, Education, Art, and Math) courses and work directly with coaches to help preschoolers improve thinking skills and better understand science

### **About Broward County Public School**

*CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE – Est. 1915*

Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) is the sixth largest public school system in the United States and the second largest in the state of Florida. BCPS is Florida's first fully accredited school system since 1962. BCPS has over 265,000 students and approximately 175,000 adult students in 238 schools, centers and technical colleges, and 103 charter schools. BCPS serves a diverse student population. Students are from 208 different countries and speak 181 different languages. For more information about BCPS and the Centennial Celebration, visit [browardschools.com](http://browardschools.com), follow BCPS on Twitter @browardschools, like BCPS on Facebook at [facebook.com/browardschools](https://www.facebook.com/browardschools), and download the free BCPS mobile app.

### **About PNC**

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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