

Nine Early Childhood Education Organizations Share \$446,000 From PNC Foundation

ST. LOUIS, Aug. 27, 2019 – Literacy programs, community gardens and cutting-edge research are among the programming being funded by the [PNC Foundation](#) in celebration of its 15th anniversary of [PNC Grow Up Great](#)® in St. Louis.



PNC Foundation is contributing \$446,000 to early childhood education organizations across the Greater St. Louis region as part of its commitment to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life. The 2019 grant recipients provide a wide range of resources to the most vulnerable St. Louis residents – young children – and targets both inner-city and suburban areas in the region. Of the nine organizations, two are receiving PNC Foundation funding for the first time and five are being funded for multi-year projects. [[See below for full list of grant recipients](#)]

“PNC is honored to support the efforts of early childhood education champions in St. Louis, as they work tirelessly to provide a spark for learning and build a foundation of success in our young children,” said Michael Scully, PNC regional president for St. Louis. “As we celebrate this milestone anniversary, we are grateful for the many early childhood education partners we’ve had over the years in St. Louis, and look forward to the impact the new 2019 grant recipients will make in our local community.”

Additionally, PNC today funded all pre-K and Head Start project requests in the Greater St. Louis area as part of its alliance with DonorsChoose.org, an online charity that connects individual donors with classrooms in need. Together, PNC and DonorsChoose.org are helping preschool teachers obtain high-quality resources and experiences to inspire their students' love of learning.

Since introducing Grow Up Great to St. Louis nine years ago, PNC has invested more than \$5 million to local early childhood education initiatives and logged more than 7,500 volunteer hours to benefit early childhood education across Greater St. Louis. This past April PNC celebrated its 15th anniversary of the bilingual, early childhood education initiative, and marked the occasion by announcing an additional \$150 million to extend the program – now a \$500 million initiative.

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group (www.pnc.com), 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 bilingual \$500 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life. To learn more about PNC Grow Up Great, please go to www.pncgrowupgreat.com.

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2019 GRANT RECIPIENTS

[First Step STL Collaborative](#)

PNC partnered with a group of funders to complete a supply and demand analysis of the early childhood system in the St. Louis region conducted by IFF. This included both quantitative and qualitative research, which paints a picture of what is working in the system and what parents, child care providers and teachers are facing in terms of barriers. This needs assessment breaks out the access issues across neighborhoods and highlights a set of recommendations that the community can pursue in order to provide more equitable access to quality early childhood education. The PNC grant will also provide seed funding for a communications strategy to bring awareness to this important early childhood work. iff.org/ | [@IFFcdfi](https://twitter.com/IFFcdfi)

[LUME Institute](#)

At LUME Institute (LUME), we believe the power to change society lies in changing the way young children are taught. The professional development services provided through the LUME Approach Early Childhood

Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) model, helps educators and caregivers gain a deeper understanding that children's emotional development is the foundation for lifelong health, growth, and learning. The LUME Approach ECMHC model was accepted into the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University Frontiers of Innovation Portfolio and has proven effective at fostering measurable change in educators' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior with concurrent statistically significant improvement in mental health outcomes for the children in their care. With funding from the PNC Foundation, LUME will provide LUME Approach training for both early childhood educators and administrative staff who serve the Michelle Obama Early Childhood Academic Learning Center in Riverview Gardens public school district. The training includes instructional and reflective coaching sessions for the early childhood educators as well as a "Leadership Immersion" course for the center's leadership.

www.lumeinstitute.org/ | [@LUMEInstitute](#)

Missouri Botanical Gardens

The Missouri Botanical Garden activates its 'Nature for All' strategy through its work with the region's youngest citizens and the adults who support, care for, and guide them through life. The Little Years Series seeks to engage parents with children ages 0-3 to experience the garden for the first time, and with the grant funding from PNC, the Garden will be bringing this series to partner organizations throughout St. Louis, including multiple St. Louis Crisis Nursery locations and Our Little Haven. Additionally, PNC funding will support garden educator outreach to students, staff and families at select early childhood centers (Unleashing Potential at Caroline Mission, Urban League Head Start, and Grace Hill Settlement House) to help transform the outdoors into nature-rich outdoor learning labs via the addition of wildlife habitat gardens, teacher professional development and family engagement events.

www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/ | [@mobotgarden](#)

Parents As Teachers

Parents As Teachers will be partnering with the PNC Foundation to host an IdeaThon at its 2019 International Conference to impact the field of early childhood education. The day-long session for parent educators will provide an opportunity for participants to pitch challenges they see in their early childhood education work, or present new ideas for addressing these challenges. The final ideas generated during the IdeaThon will be shared with the larger group of more than 1300 conference attendees to decide which ideas are most actionable and how they might be used in the future to benefit the early childhood education field around the world.

parentsasteachers.org/ | [@NatIPAT](#)

Springboard to Learning

Springboard to Learning, with support from the PNC Foundation, will deploy Wolf Trap teaching artists, providing residencies, professional development (PD), family workshops and BabyArts Play, to children ages birth to six during 2019-2021 school years. Through residencies and professional development sessions, teaching artists model arts-integrated techniques for the classroom teacher and provide instruction on how to implement the techniques. Family workshops equip parents to integrate arts strategies into daily family home-life, extending learning beyond school, whereas BabyArts Play exposes families to cultural institutions.

www.springboardstl.org/ | [@SpringboardStL](#)

St. Louis County Library

St. Louis County Library's "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten" program is designed to encourage families and caregivers in St. Louis County to read 1,000 books with their preschooler before they enter kindergarten. Studies show that families who read aloud to their children starting at birth help strengthen important language and vocabulary building skills. With the support of the PNC Foundation, parents and caregivers of preschool-age children can register for the program free of cost and will be able to monitor their progress toward 1,000 books.

www.slcl.org/ | [@SLCL](#)

St. Louis Public Library

Born To Read provides a series of comprehensive and equitable programs, services, and strategic community outreach designed to support early childhood literacy development for children birth to age eight in the City of St. Louis. The St. Louis Public Library partners with hospitals, health clinics, early childhood centers, and schools to provide early childhood literacy resources and services. Born to Read programs include Born to Read Bags, My First Library Card, Storytimes, Read it Together, Play Date Theater, and Summer@SLPL.

www.slpl.org/ | [@STLpubLibrary](#)

The Magic House

The Magic House, with support from the PNC Foundation, is providing an exciting new venue for early childhood education, the "Wonder Why? Early Childhood Learning Lab." The Wonder Why? Early Childhood

Learning Lab is an innovative space designed to satisfy the boundless curiosity of preschoolers. Staffed by an early childhood educator, this flexible learning environment will provide space for preschool programming, as well as easily transform into an early learning exhibit gallery. In addition, the venue will offer educational opportunities for parents and caregivers, presenting concrete child development information in interactive and engaging ways.

www.magichouse.org/ | [@TheMagicHouse](#)

Turn the Page STL

Turn the Page STL, St. Louis' Network Partner of the National Campaign for Grade Level Reading, will be engaging 30 community organizations to provide high-quality educational experiences for families with young children, ages birth to five. With support from the PNC Foundation, Turn the Page STL will align the community organizations' work in early childhood education to improve school readiness, school attendance and summer learning in the St. Louis Promise Zone.

<https://www.facebook.com/turnthepagestl/> | [@turnthepagestl](#)

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