PNC Announces New Initiatives to Inspire Outdoor Learning, Classroom Innovation Through PNC Grow Up Great

Collaborations with Sesame Workshop and DonorsChoose will strengthen science, math and literacy skills through everyday experiences and fund creative classroom ideas

PITTSBURGH, March 31, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc., is kicking off Great Month, its annual celebration of PNC Grow Up Great® and high-quality early childhood education, by announcing new initiatives with two longtime collaborators.

The PNC Foundation announced a $6.2 million grant to Sesame Workshop to support a multi-year school readiness effort focused on outdoor and play-based learning. This initiative will develop new resources to help young children build school readiness skills in science, math and literacy, and will encourage them to explore their interests and form connections that support early learning.

Available this week at sesameworkshop.org and pncgrowupgreat.com are new Sesame Street Muppet videos, printable activity sheets, articles and an outdoor science web-based adult learning app. A Sesame Street "Go Outside…Grow Outside" growth chart will be available April 1 in PNC branches.

Research shows that outdoor and play-based learning can strengthen science, literacy and math skills while supporting physical development and emotional well-being. Many young children, however, have limited opportunities for safe outdoor play and hands-on exploration, particularly in under-resourced communities. The initiative responds to this need by giving parents, caregivers and educators practical tools that make experiential learning easier to integrate into daily routines.

"We know that all experiences can spark learning, especially when a child is curious about what's around them," said Sally McCrady, chair and president of the PNC Foundation. "These new resources will help families build on children's curiosity to learn through simple daily activities, from counting bounces of a ball at the playground to noticing how birds blend into tree branches."

"Our longstanding partnership with PNC Foundation helps inspire children's curiosity about their environment," said Kama Einhorn, senior director of Content Design at Sesame Workshop. "By encouraging outdoor exploration, we nurture a sense of wonder and discovery that is essential for lifelong learning, helping every child connect with nature and develop critical skills for the future."

Additionally, to continue the momentum of Great Month, **PNC Grow Up Great has fully funded nearly 1,000 DonorsChoose classroom projects totaling nearly $600,000, submitted by public pre-K and Head Start teachers in the communities where PNC employees live and work.** The projects align with the mission and focus areas of PNC Grow Up Great, with supplemental support directed to needs related to health, sports and wellness, and warmth, care and hunger. PNC and DonorsChoose, an education nonprofit that allows individuals to

donate directly to classroom projects, have collaborated since 2017 to help teachers obtain quality resources and experiences for students in public pre-K, public charter and Head Start classrooms. The $20 million alliance has used flash funds, match offers, DonorsChoose gift codes and jumpstart donations to support early childhood learning.

In April, PNC Grow Up Great and DonorsChoose will build on this support by spotlighting the creativity of early childhood educators who are designing innovative outdoor play and learning experiences. During Great Month, public pre-K and Head Start teachers in PNC communities will be invited to submit outdoor-focused classroom projects through DonorsChoose. **Qualifying projects will receive a $500 jumpstart donation from PNC Grow Up Great** to help expand hands-on learning and exploration for young learners.

To empower employee volunteerism and participation in PNC's volunteer grant program, PNC announced that beginning April 1, **volunteer grants will double for individual and team volunteers**. Previously offered as Double the Impact grants during occasions such as PNC Grow Up Great's 20th anniversary in 2024, the new amounts range from a $2,000 grant for an individual who volunteers 40 hours with an approved partner to $6,000 for a four- to 10-person team that combines for 100 hours. PNC's paid volunteerism policy provides employees up to 40 hours of paid time off each year to volunteer with approved organizations, and volunteers have earned more than $12 million in grants for PNC Grow Up Great partners. This year, employees can support outdoor learning by assembling Discover Math in Nature! activity kits, reading nature-themed books in pre-K classrooms, and assembling bird houses, bug hotels and sunshine crafts.

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (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 PNC 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. For more information, visit http://www.pncgrowupgreat.com.

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