



PNC Pledges \$250 Million to Help More At-Risk Kids Grow Up Great

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One Million Children Benefited Since Program's 2004 Launch -

WASHINGTON, Oct. 5, 2011 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC) announced today the \$250 million extension of [PNC Grow Up Great](#), the innovative program supporting [early childhood education](#) that has benefited more than 1 million children.

Washington area preschoolers and Elmo and Cookie Monster from *Sesame Street(TM)* joined Washington, D.C. Mayor Vincent Gray, and PNC Chairman and Chief Executive Officer James E. Rohr to unveil the program, which will continue to focus on math, science, the arts and financial education.

"Research shows that for every \$1 invested in early childhood education, there is a \$16 savings for society," said Rohr. "This additional funding over 10 years allows us to reach more children, parents and teachers during a time of tight federal and state budgets and increased expectations for a skilled workforce."

First launched in 2004 as a 10-year, \$100 million initiative, *Grow Up Great* is considered one of the most comprehensive corporate school readiness programs of its kind. It has earned national recognition for programming through \$40 million in grants to numerous non-profit organizations and other initiatives funded by the PNC Foundation, which receives its principal support from The PNC Financial Services Group.

U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski, chairwoman of the Senate subcommittee on Children and Families, and Michael Levine, founding director of the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop, are scheduled today to participate in an early education symposium hosted by [Washington Post Live](#) and sponsored by PNC. Other participants in the forum include: Jacqueline Jones, senior advisor on early learning to the U.S. Secretary of Education; Roberto J. Rodriguez, special assistant to the President for education policy; Diane Trister Dodge, acclaimed early education author; and Mark Shriver, managing director for Save the Children.

Highlights of Announcement

As part of the extension of *Grow Up Great*, PNC also announced a \$7 million expansion of its preschool science initiative to new markets it serves. The competitive grant program will fund regional science centers and non-profit organizations that give children opportunities for inquiry-based science learning and experience related activities that are educational and fun.

Ten organizations have qualified to receive final, third-year grants totaling \$1.3 million from the existing *Grow Up Great* with Science program, which launched in 2009. The two programs combined will have provided \$13 million in science education funding for thousands of preschool children in underserved communities.

Rohr also said that one of *Grow Up Great's* latest programs, a financial education initiative for preschoolers, will distribute \$5 million in grants to several libraries and social service non-profit organizations to facilitate instruction. The instruction will be based on the lessons in the "For Me, for You, for Later: First Steps to Spending, Sharing and Saving(TM)," multi-media bilingual financial education activity kit Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit organization behind *Sesame Street*, created for PNC.

Separate online financial education instruction is also available as part of "S Is for Savings," a new PNC children's savings account that informs and entertains. Its interactive functions utilize *Sesame Street* characters to reinforce a basic understanding of spending, saving and sharing and leverage the lessons of "For Me, for You, for Later."

"PNC *Grow Up Great* will continue to support organizations that provide quality early childhood educational opportunities for at risk children from birth to age five and do more to integrate the latest technology to engage parents in their children's learning," Rohr said.

Other highlights include initiatives to:

- Support professional development of teachers
- Increase and diversify employee volunteerism, a hallmark of the program
- Continue PNC's advocacy for quality early education among business leaders and public officials at all levels

An online media kit containing downloadable video and audio sound bytes as well as the link to watch the Washington Post Live early education symposium is available at <http://www.pnc.com/earlyedextension>.

The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (<http://www.pnc.com/>) is one of the nation's largest diversified financial services organizations providing retail and business banking; residential mortgage banking; specialized services for corporations and government entities, including corporate banking, real estate finance and asset-based lending; wealth management and asset management. Follow @PNCNews on Twitter for breaking news and announcements from PNC.

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