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**ZIMMER CHILDREN'S MUSEUM LAUNCHES
"CITIZEN K" KINDERGARTEN READINESS PROGRAM**

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. (May 8, 2013) – The Zimmer Children's Museum is excited to announce its new innovative program, Citizen K: A Whole Child Approach to Kindergarten Readiness. In partnership with the Early Childhood Parenting Center in Santa Monica, the curriculum will combine clinical and Early Childhood Education perspectives to engage educators, parents and students in a better understanding of social and emotional milestones appropriate for children entering Kindergarten. The program will pilot this summer at Para Los Niños with plans to make the program more widely available to preschools across Los Angeles in the fall.

Research indicates that a focus on all four developmental areas (cognitive, physical, social and emotional) is critical for future academic and life success for all young people. With an intent to help even the playing field for traditionally underperforming schools, the Citizen K program has a dual focus: to ease the Kindergarten transition for individual students but also to create Kindergarten classes where teachers can focus on instruction because students enter ready to learn.

"While quality pre-K education can adequately address all areas of development, the unfortunate reality is that many programs are unable to cultivate the social and emotional needs of students, which can result in lesser cognitive development, setting the stage for behavioral and psychological struggles later in adolescence and further contributing to the complicated matrix of issues plaguing underperforming schools," says Museum Director Julee Brooks.

A multi-pronged approach, Citizen K provides support to a preschool classroom for one school year and includes program components that address many facets identified to resolve the discrepancy in social-emotional learning in low-income communities. A combination of classroom and community events will provide resources to establish a catalogue of common activities and strategies to align teacher and parent efforts with regards to emotional and social milestones. The program culminates with two museum field trips where children and families can employ those strategies in the museum's interactive exhibits and immersive play environments.

The methodology at the Zimmer Children's Museum capitalizes on a child's own innate ability to learn through play. Play is a child's work and a pathway for children to build an understanding of the world in which they live. By incorporating play-based learning strategies such as that that occurs at Zimmer Children's Museum, children learn to negotiate in group settings, navigate emotional actions and reactions of themselves and others, practice social skills such as self-regulation and frustration tolerance and develop empathy in order to establish and sustain relationships.

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About the Zimmer Children's Museum

Zimmer Children's Museum is an interactive children's museum and youth development organization. Its programs and exhibits are dedicated to instilling young people with the confidence and desire to shape their own lives and those around them for the better. Visited by almost 70,000 people annually from diverse Los Angeles families, the museum offers a hands-on and free play learning experience that teaches children aged 0-8 social responsibility and community values. Its youth development program, youTHink, engages over 3,000 public school students annually in programs that use art and creativity to explore issues, generate ideas, and consider other viewpoints. youTHink's programs empower young people to find their voice, seek leadership roles and take action in their communities.

About the Early Childhood Parenting Center

The mission of the Early Childhood Parenting Center is to help parents feel knowledgeable and secure in their parenting choices so that they can establish a solid foundation on which to build social and emotional health and well being for their children. We accomplish this by providing infant/toddler groups to new parents, one on one counseling, and specialized attention to the parents and children with highly skilled, experienced professional group leaders. In our Santa Monica facility we have a spacious indoor and outdoor play space for our parenting groups and private rooms for individual support. We also provide parenting education and groups to vulnerable and high risk parents and children in domestic violence and transitional housing shelters through our Community Outreach program so that parents will be able to provide their children with positive and healthy care. Our vision is to educate, support and provide mental health intervention to high-risk parents. Our professional training program for interns assures that young professionals will be well educated in early childhood intervention for a wide variety of populations. ECPC was founded in 1970 as a division of Child-Family Psychiatry at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles and our services are based on current early childhood parenting research and information.

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