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FORTY CARROTS FAMILY CENTER AWARDED \$15,000 GRANT FROM PNC FOUNDATION TO EXPAND PARTNERS IN PLAY PROGRAM

SARASOTA, Fla., Aug. 11, 2016 – Forty Carrots Family Center has received a \$15,000 grant from the PNC Foundation for its Partners In Play classes, to provide free, weekly parenting education and early childhood education in all 14 Sarasota and Manatee County Libraries. PNC provided the funding through *Grow Up Great*, its initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life.

The PNC grant will allow Forty Carrots Family Center to expand the number of Partners In Play (PIP) classes offered this summer by 70 percent over last summer. In total, the agency will provide 680 PIP classes in local libraries to more than 1,300 children over the coming 12 months.

Forty Carrots' program provides parents and children the opportunity to play and learn together and is open to all families with children age 5 and under.

"Children have a better chance of succeeding when there's instruction outside of the classroom that includes hands-on learning before the age of 5," said Chad Loar, PNC regional president of Florida West, speaking on behalf of the Foundation. "We understand that a sound education is a significant driver of our economic success, which provides an opportunity to help build a solid foundation for the future of this region."

At Forty Carrots, each mobile classroom includes materials and activities to foster early literacy, math, science and art skills. Activity stations change for every class and include things like tunnels to develop gross motor skills and homemade playdough for fine motor muscles essential for later handwriting. Each class closes with a circle time that teaches new songs and fingerplay that families can use any time.

Parents also learn tips and strategies they can employ at home as their child's first and most important teacher, and get support on issues from routines to sleep to development. In response to the classes, parents have said that they learned new ways to handle challenges like tantrums and positive ways to engage their children, such as reading every day.

"We are honored that our program was chosen for support by this early childhood education initiative and are thrilled that we will be able to reach even more families throughout Sarasota and Manatee this summer," said Michelle Kapreilian, Forty Carrots' executive director. "There are so few enriching activities that children and parents can

participate in for free in our community, and yet this kind of learning together is so important for all families."

To learn more about Forty Carrots Family Center or to see a schedule of PIP classes, go to www.fortycarrots.org.

About PNC

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 \$350 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life.

To learn more about the PNC Grow Up Great initiative, go to www.pncgrowupgreat.com. Follow PNC at www.twitter.com/PNCNews and www.youtube.com/PNC.

About Forty Carrots

Forty Carrots Family Center strives to provide children with a Good Beginning That Lasts a Lifetime through its NAEYC-accredited Preschool, award-winning Parenting Center, and Free Community Outreach Program providing more than 1,300 free parenting education and mental health classes throughout the community annually. Rated 4-Stars by Charity Navigator, Forty Carrots fundraises to provide these services to families from all walks of life, with 90% of families receiving free services. www.fortycarrots.org

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