

May 12, 2009

**FRED ROGERS CENTER AT SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE  
ANNOUNCES NEARLY \$900,000 IN GRANTS FOR NEW INITIATIVES**

LATROBE, PA – The Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children’s Media at Saint Vincent College has recently received several major grants to advance key initiatives of the Center’s new, three-year strategic plan.

The Center announced grants of \$500,000 from the PNC Foundation, \$150,000 from The Grable Foundation, \$50,000 from The Pittsburgh Foundation, and \$50,000 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. An additional grant of \$136,500 from The Heinz Endowments is supporting “green” projects at the College, including environmental education projects involving the Rogers Center and enhancements to the new Fred M. Rogers Center building.

“We are extremely grateful to these foundations for their generous support of our vision for the future of this national center as we go ‘beyond the Neighborhood’ to build upon Fred’s incredible legacy,” said Max King, executive director of the Fred Rogers Center. “Beyond the Neighborhood” is the title of the Center’s new, three-year plan.

The Center has begun to develop five new initiatives.

-- The **Fred Rogers Fellows program** to support early-career and aspiring professionals in the creation of innovative children’s media and related projects, providing them with opportunities to develop in much the same way that Fred Rogers began his groundbreaking work in the 1950s. The first Fred Rogers Fellows will be supported in 2009-2010 through the grants from The Grable Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

-- The **Fred Rogers Center Learning Network**, tapping the educational and community-building power of new media and communications technology to develop an early learning support system for teachers, caregivers, and families of young children.

-- A **national conference series for field-building in children’s media**, beginning with the *Fred Rogers Center Conference on Creative Curiosity, New Media, and Learning*, to be held in Pittsburgh and Latrobe, PA, in March 2010. The 2010 conference is supported by the grants from The Grable Foundation and The Pittsburgh Foundation.

-- A partnership with Families and Work Institute in New York on a **documentary film project on learning and development**, entitled *Learning Lives*, being planned with a team of Emmy-award winning producers and child development experts as “reality”

programming to follow groups of Pittsburgh-area families and their children from infancy through high school and beyond.

-- A partnership with the Center on Media and Child Health at Harvard to develop a **youth-created media program**, *A Beautiful Day in My Neighborhood*, that would enable children as young as three years old to use video technology as a tool for creativity, communication, and exploration around topics that help them to understand their lives and their world.

The three-year plan for the Rogers Center also includes preservation activities and access provisions for the Fred Rogers Archive as well as continuation of the current Fellows program for nationally recognized senior scholars and practitioners. The "PNC Grow Up Great Endowed Fellow at the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media" has been established as a rotating senior fellowship to support research and other work related to the Center's new initiatives.

"Through its new strategic initiatives," said Archabbot Douglas R. Nowicki, O.S.B., Chancellor of Saint Vincent College, "the Rogers Center will guide current and future generations of educators, parents, media professionals, and others in approaching their work on behalf of children and families in the spirit of Fred's characteristic compassion and empathy."

The Fred Rogers Center was established at Saint Vincent College in September 2003, following three years of planning under the leadership and guidance of Fred Rogers himself. Fred's collaboration with the College on this endeavor was a natural extension of the Rogers family's longstanding relationship with the Saint Vincent community as well as Fred's personal identification with the liberal arts and Benedictine traditions of the College. Staying true to the vision of its namesake and emulating the guiding principles of his life's work, the mission of the Fred Rogers Center is to advance the fields of early learning and children's media by acting as a catalyst for communication, collaboration, and creative change.

---

**For Information:**

Don Orlando, *Director, Public Relations*

Saint Vincent College, 300 Fraser Purchase Road, Latrobe, PA 15650-2690

Phone 724 805-2010, FAX 724 805-2019, [pr@stvincent.edu](mailto:pr@stvincent.edu), [www.stvincent.edu](http://www.stvincent.edu)