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SAIL Partnership awards more than \$675,000 in grants to prevent summer learning loss

Birmingham, AL (January 10, 2014) – Thanks to SAIL (Summer Adventures in Learning), a partnership of ten area funders, 32 grants totaling more than \$675,000 has been awarded to programs that provide summer learning opportunities for children. The nonprofit organizations receiving grants this year include schools, learning centers, camps and churches. The grants are used to support programs that enhance or add rigorous academic components that help prevent learning loss, offer chances to explore new interests and skills and close the achievement gap for low-income children.

National studies have shown that students typically return to school one to three months behind where they were at the end of the previous school year. But, according to the results of assessment testing coordinated by PARCA, participants in the 2013 Summer Adventures in Learning programs advanced more than a month on average. Some programs helped students jump three to four months ahead.

“We were definitely pleased to see that these summer learning programs are closing the learning gap for low-income children,” said Jim Wooten, executive director of the Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation. “SAIL is a unique collaboration of funders, program hosts, educational services providers and other organizations with an interest in education. The funders write checks, but we do much more, and all the SAIL partners collaborate to strengthen one another and to give our children the opportunity for a better life.”

In 2012 six area funders collaborated in SAIL to award 16 grants totaling \$455,000, this year four new funders have joined in the partnership. The SAIL partners for 2014 grant cycle are: Alabama Power Foundation, The Belk Foundation, The Caring Foundation of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama, Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, Daniel Foundation of Alabama, Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation, Joseph S. Bruno Charitable Foundation, The Junior League of Birmingham, Mike & Gillian Goodrich Foundation and United Way of Central Alabama.

Organizations receiving grants for 2014 summer programs are:

A.G. Gaston Boys & Girls Club

American Baseball Foundation, Inc (in partnership with the Jefferson County Board of Education)

Antioch Missionary Baptist Church

Better Basics
Birmingham Zoo, Inc.
Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Alabama
Breakthrough Birmingham
Cahaba River Society
Children's Fresh Air Farm
Cornerstone Schools of Alabama
Summer Advantage USA (in partnership with the Bessemer Board of Education)
Summer Advantage USA (in partnership with the Birmingham Board of Education)
Fresh Start Family Solutions
Girls Incorporated of Central Alabama
Camp Shiloh (GSBC Community Development)
Higher Achievement Summer School
Household of Faith Church, Inc
Impact Alabama: A Student Service Initiative
IMPACT Family Counseling
Jones Valley Teaching Farm
New Rising Star Missionary Baptist Church Community Support Corporation
NorthStar Youth Ministries
Norwood Resource Center
Public Affairs Council of Alabama (PARCA)
YMCA of Greater Birmingham (three branches)
Sixth Avenue Baptist Church Summer Camp
Tarrant City Schools
The Learning Village
YWCA Central Alabama
Zion Spring Baptist Church

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About SAIL: Summer Adventures in Learning developed as part of an action plan to respond to a survey of 37 Birmingham area summer programs, conducted by the National Summer Learning Association in 2011. Through this important partnership, funders committed to use a joint application process for nonprofit organizations wishing to receive grant support to enhance or add consistent academic components to summer youth programs. Awarding grants through SAIL are Alabama Power Foundation, The Belk Foundation, The Caring Foundation of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama, Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, Daniel Foundation of Alabama, Joseph S. Bruno Charitable Foundation, The Junior League of Birmingham, Mike & Gillian Goodrich Foundation, Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation and United Way of Central Alabama

The Summer Adventures in Learning (SAIL) Partnership focuses on summer programs where students can explore new interests and skills and gain the support they need to prevent summer learning loss. Data show that summer learning loss accounts for nearly two-thirds of the ninth grade achievement gap in reading. They also shows that the effects of participation in a summer learning program can benefit the child for at least two years afterwards. Local experience in Birmingham has shown average gains of at least two months in reading and math during a five to six week program, making a significant positive difference for these children.