



Edward J. Kozmor  
PNC  
(215) 585-5437  
(609) 841-5765 - cell  
edward.kozmor@pnc.com



Carolyn Belardo  
The Academy of Natural Sciences  
(215) 299-1043  
[belardo@ansp.org](mailto:belardo@ansp.org)



Kat Stein  
The Franklin Institute  
(215) 448-2375  
[kstein@fi.edu](mailto:kstein@fi.edu)

**The Franklin Institute, The Academy of Natural Sciences, and PNC Grow Up Great collaborate to boost science skills of area preschoolers**

*The PNC Foundation invests in teacher training and family learning activities*

PHILADELPHIA, PA, May 7, 2009 - Area preschool teachers will have the opportunity to learn how to teach hands-on science basics in their classrooms thanks to a significant two-year grant to The Franklin Institute and The Academy of Natural Sciences from The PNC Foundation.

The funding supports *Grow Up Great with Science*, PNC's new initiative to help foster a foundation in science for area preschoolers at a time when many educators have sought increased emphasis on the discipline. A study by the National Research Council recognized that providing young children with research-based mathematics and science learning is likely to pay off with increased achievement, literacy and work skills in these critical areas. The PNC Foundation has pledged up to \$6 million in grants to fund regional science centers over three years and conduct an independent evaluation of the program's success.

"The Franklin Institute believes in the importance of early childhood education, particularly in science, and is thrilled to launch the *Grow Up Great With Science* program in collaboration with our longtime partner, PNC Financial Services Group." said Franklin Institute President and CEO Dennis M. Wint. "We look forward to the opportunity to introduce the youngest of children, their families, and their teachers, to the wonders of science through our remarkable hands-on education programs."

"Planting the 'interest' seed of science in young children is a fundamental goal of The Academy of Natural Sciences, because it is these children who will grow up to be stewards of their environments," added William Y. Brown, President and CEO of The Academy of Natural Sciences.

-more-

The investments made by the PNC Foundation, which receives its principle funding from The PNC Financial Services Group (NYSE: PNC), to The Franklin Institute and The Academy of Natural Sciences were two of 15 grants in seven states and the District of Columbia in celebration of the fifth anniversary of PNC Grow Up Great, the 10-year, \$100 million investment in early childhood education.

“Our support of The Franklin Institute and The Academy of Natural Sciences is another strategic investment to help our non-profit partners, preschools and caregivers develop stronger, smarter and healthier families and communities,” said Bill Mills, president of PNC for Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey. “Through these grants, we expect children will have experiences that would not otherwise be possible.”

The Franklin Institute, The Academy of Natural Sciences and the other grant recipients will use the funding to train local preschool teachers and introduce families of preschool children to science through visits to the centers’ interactive exhibits.

In addition, experts from the science centers will travel to classrooms to help teachers create children’s activities that will enable them to explore science with their senses and use simple tools to test their ideas. Many of the activities will receive assistance from PNC employees as volunteers. Continued funding is contingent upon successful completion of the prior years’ project goals.

### **About The Franklin Institute**

Located in the heart of Philadelphia, The Franklin Institute is a renowned and innovative leader in the field of science and technology learning, as well as a dynamic center of activity. Pennsylvania’s most visited museum, it is dedicated to creating a passion for learning about science by offering new and exciting access to science and technology. For more information, visit [www.fi.edu](http://www.fi.edu).

### **About The Academy of Natural Sciences**

Founded in 1812, The Academy of Natural Sciences is the oldest natural science research institution and museum in the Americas and a world leader in biodiversity and environmental research. Located in the heart of Philadelphia, the museum is one of the city’s top cultural attractions. The mission of the Academy is the encouragement and cultivation of the sciences. For more information, visit [www.ansp.org](http://www.ansp.org).

# # #