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Vilcek Foundation teams with Little Kids Rock

Program highlights achievements of immigrant children

New York City, NY (August 20, 2012) — The Vilcek Foundation today announced the award of a \$10,000 grant to fund the production of music videos featuring immigrant students of Little Kids Rock music programs.

Little Kids Rock trains interested public school teachers to create or reinvigorate music programs that have been stripped from their schools due to budget cuts. Little Kids Rock provides all the necessary curricula, classroom materials, and instruments—at no cost to teachers, students, or schools. The curriculum is student-centered and based on the contemporary music of today, played on modern “rock band” instruments.

What began in 1992 as an idea in one classroom, with one teacher, is now 85,000 students and 850 teachers strong, and has become a nationwide educational reform movement geared toward changing the way music is taught in our public schools. “The musical movement started by Little Kids Rock is extremely influential,” said Rick Kinsel, Executive Director of the Vilcek Foundation, “and we are proud to team up with these innovators, as we firmly believe in the power of arts to enrich children’s lives, by helping them think creatively and then apply this mind-set to other aspects of their education and lives.”

Little Kids Rock’s largest and most well-established chapters are located in cities of with large populations of immigrants—New York, Los Angeles, Tampa, and Dallas. These four cities alone represent almost fifty thousand of the program’s current student body. “As children of immigrants, or newly arrived themselves, our young people are gaining entrée to their school communities and peer groups through the language of music,” said David Wish, Executive Director of Little Kids Rock. “In partnership with the Vilcek Foundation,” he said, “we seek to highlight their voices and experiences, as well as shine a light on the impact of Little Kids Rock’s educational reform movement.”

For more information about Little Kids Rock, please visit www.LittleKidsRock.org.

To see the Vilcek Foundation’s full grant history, please visit www.Vilcek.org.

About the Vilcek Foundation

The Vilcek Foundation was established in 2000 by Jan and Marica Vilcek, immigrants from the former Czechoslovakia. The mission of the Foundation, to honor the contributions of foreign-born scholars and artists living in the United States, was inspired by the couple’s careers in biomedical science and art history, respectively, as well as their personal experiences and appreciation for the opportunities they received as newcomers to this country. The Foundation hosts events to promote the work of immigrants, awards annual prizes to prominent immigrant biomedical scientists, and sponsors cultural programs such as the Hawaii International Film Festival. For more information, please visit www.Vilcek.org.