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Young Leadership Council's Project Prodigy Summer Camp to become part of New Orleans Jazz Institute Music Program

New Orleans, LA (April 27, 2011) – The Young Leadership Council (YLC), a non-profit civic group of young professionals that creates and manages community projects in the name of leadership development, announced today that its longest-running community program – the Project Prodigy Summer Music Camp – will be integrated into the University of New Orleans-based New Orleans Jazz Institute this summer.

Project Prodigy is a summer music camp for underserved public school students in the fourth through eighth grades, which enriches musical skills and nourishes an appreciation of the arts in the children who participate. The camp averages 100 students each summer. Open to any child regardless of financial situation or previous musical experience, the camp has been funded and managed by the Young Leadership Council for almost two decades.

The New Orleans Jazz Institute will take over the program moving forward to enhance resources and provide a wider range of instruction opportunities to campers.

“In the past few years, Irvin Mayfield, who founded the New Orleans Jazz Institute, has come to play with our summer camp kids at their final recital. As he and I began talking about how he can better support the program, it became obvious that it would be a natural tie-in to transition the camp to the New Orleans Jazz Institute,” said Lee C. Reid, YLC project leader for the camp. “We are very excited to turn over such a long-running and successful program into the hands of this visionary leader in music education and culture in New Orleans.”

Project Prodigy has enjoyed much success since its founding in 1992. Many of the best band directors in the city work the camp year in and year out. Some students who were introduced to music by the Project Prodigy summer camp have gone on to attend the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA), a pre-professional arts training center that provides intensive instruction in dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual arts and creative writing. Many professional musicians like Irvin Mayfield and Troy “Trombone

Shorty” Andrews credit the band directors who run the camp with helping them develop their talent when they were in school.

“The Young Leadership Council should be commended for fostering and succeeding with Project Prodigy, one of the longest running music education programs in the city. I am very excited about the partnership between Project Prodigy and the New Orleans Jazz Institute since it fulfills my vision of providing year-round music education to the children of New Orleans,” states Irvin Mayfield, Founder and Artistic Director of the New Orleans Jazz Institute.

Adding, “This partnership is a cornerstone towards building an educational system that not only uses music as a vehicle towards achievement but a system that harnesses the resources of community partners like Veolia and RTA, who will provide free public transportation to the students; the UNO Charter School Network, who will provide facilities and graduate students; and the University of New Orleans, an educational institution that is leading the charge of music education. In a few years, I am confident that Project Prodigy will be a nationwide leader in the movement of increasing student achievement through music.”

“We are delighted to include Project Prodigy in our New Orleans Jazz Institute at UNO. As one of the very best summer music programs in the area, Project Prodigy is a natural extension of our own Saturday Music School. Together, the two programs give elementary and middle school children a real chance to develop their musical abilities under the guidance of dedicated music educators year round,” said Susan E. Krantz, Dean College of Liberal Arts

For more information about Project Prodigy, please contact the YLC at (504) 585-1500.

The Young Leadership Council is a non-profit, non-partisan civic organization created to develop leadership through community projects. Through volunteer-created community projects, the YLC recruits and retains young professionals to New Orleans, creating a positive impact on the quality of life in the region. The oldest, independent YPO (young professionals' organization) in the country, the YLC has raised more than \$25 million to support community projects in and around the New Orleans area since 1986.

Founded in partnership with University of New Orleans and the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra in 2008, the mission of the New Orleans Jazz Institute (NOJI) is to link UNO's strengths in jazz education with the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra's strengths in professional practice and performance. NOJI serves to promote creative excellence and best practices in Jazz composition, performance, scholarship, importation, exportation, and education.

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