



## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **NRG Energy Sponsors Young Audiences In Restoring Arts to Trenton Students**

**TRENTON, N.J., December 12, 2011**—Acclaimed Philadelphia-based dance ensemble Illstyle & Peace performed and hosted dance workshops for students today at Columbus Elementary School, 1200 Brunswick Avenue. NRG Energy sponsored the performance and workshop through the Young Audiences New Jersey's Adopt-A-School Initiative.

The event highlighted the effort to bring the arts back to the children of Trenton. Princeton-based energy company NRG has contributed \$55,000 to Young Audiences over the past two years so that more children can benefit from an arts-rich curriculum.

"My teachers and administrators are so very pleased that NRG Energy is helping bring first-rate artists to our elementary schools. It is through their commitment that our students are being given the opportunity to exercise self-expression in the most positive and creative ways. Arts education programs are making a difference in these young peoples' lives," said Raymond Broach, Trenton's Interim Superintendent.

Monday's performance by Illstyle & Peace, titled "Become Your Dreams," featured 10 artists demonstrating through high-energy dance that perseverance and paying attention are keys to reaching a student's highest goals. The ensemble traces hip-hop dance styles from the late '60s through the present to teach positive messages.

"The Adopt-a-School Arts Education Grant provided us with a tremendous opportunity to have the arts brought here, to Columbus School," said Lorenzo Gonzalez, Parent Liaison, Columbus School. "Without the generosity of NRG, the children of Columbus School would not be able to see live, culturally diverse performances and make meaningful connections with professional artists. Thanks to NRG and Young Audiences New Jersey, it has been possible for our students to appreciate and value the arts, which will last a lifetime."

The Adopt-a-School Program has grown each year since its founding. This year marks the second year that every elementary school in Trenton will receive arts education programming by Young Audiences New Jersey artists. NRG joins a group of dedicated funders that have supported this initiative for several years, including Wachovia Wells Fargo Foundation, Educational Testing Service, Princeton Area Community Foundation and The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

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### **About Young Audiences**

Founded in 1973, Young Audiences New Jersey is the premiere arts-in-education resource in the state, providing high-quality performances and artist-in-residence programs to nearly 500,000 children pre-kindergarten through 12th grade annually. YANJ's extensive professional artist roster represents all art forms—from dance and theater to music, language and visual arts.

The Young Audiences program, Arts for Learning, brings arts-based literacy programs to elementary school teachers, helping them improve student reading and writing. This arts-integrated approach helps students learn literacy concepts and skills using dance, music, theater and visual arts as teaching tools. Young Audiences' programs are accessible to all socio-economic, ethnic, cultural, and geographic communities, and are designed to strengthen the arts in schools, meet local and state curriculum standards, involve families in arts activities, and enrich cultural life in New Jersey's communities.

YANJ is the first arts education organization designated as a major service organization by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and, as part of the national network of Young Audiences, Inc. was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Clinton. Projects like this and the 4,000 programs provided annually by Young Audiences New Jersey are made possible in part through a grant from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State and funds from the National Endowment for the Arts.

### **About NRG**

NRG is at the forefront of changing how people think about and use energy. A Fortune 500 company, NRG is a pioneer in developing cleaner and smarter energy choices for our customers: whether as one of the largest solar power developers in the country, or by building the first privately funded electric vehicle charging infrastructure or by giving customers the latest smart energy solutions to better manage their energy use. Our diverse power generating facilities can support over 20 million homes and our retail electricity providers—Reliant, Green Mountain Energy Company and Energy Plus—serve more than two million customers. Since 2004, NRG Global Giving has donated over \$15 million to charitable organizations throughout the U.S. that focus on fighting hunger, helping impoverished families and protecting the environment. More information is available at [nrgenergy.com](http://nrgenergy.com).

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