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FLAMBOYAN FOUNDATION HONORED AS PROMISING NEW NATIONAL PARTNER AT THE PARENT-TEACHER HOME VISIT PROJECT'S FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

*Foundation President, DCPS Teacher and Parent Highlight the Importance of Building Trusting Relationships to
Accelerating Student Learning*

Washington, D.C. –Today, Flamboyant Foundation is being showcased at the Parent-Teacher Home Visit Project's (PTHVP) fifth annual national conference for their leadership in bringing the PTHVP relationship-building model of home visits to Washington, D.C. public schools. PTHVP is honoring Flamboyant's commitment to identifying family engagement strategies that work in D.C., and the foundation's role in securing funding and spearheading the organization of the local home visit program.

"Home visits give teachers and parents the opportunity to build trusting relationships of mutual respect and create a collaborative partnership," Kristin Ehrgood, President of Flamboyant Foundation, said. "Working with PTHVP, our home visit program is making strides in D.C., with hundreds of teachers seizing on this proven strategy for driving student learning."

PTHVP's four-day conference in Reno, Nevada is bringing approximately 250 teachers, parents, administrators, union leaders, foundations, and nonprofits together to learn how to launch, scale and sustain a successful home visit program. Ehrgood will present alongside Christine Rey, a DCPS teacher at Garfield Elementary, and Aquila Watson, a DCPS parent. Ehrgood will also participate in a panel discussion about securing funding for home visit projects.

"Flamboyant Foundation's commitment to building a successful home visit program that really works for teachers and parents in D.C. is inspiring," Carrie Rose, Executive Director of PTHVP, said. "Flamboyant's work helping teachers and families forge trusting relationships is being met with enthusiasm and making a real difference."

Since PTHVP's founding in 1998, the program has been adopted by the state of California and invited by over a dozen states to help train teachers on home visits. In 2010, PTHVP was recognized as a "Bright Idea," program by Harvard University's Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Home visits show families that teachers value them as partners in their child's education. Through an initial meeting in the home that allows teachers to develop a trusting relationship with families, teachers build the foundation for developing strong parent allies who monitor children's academic progress and knowledgeably support their child's schoolwork. During home visits, teachers learn about families' goals for their children, as well as children's past experiences in school, their talents and their interests. Many teachers report that home visits help them better differentiate instruction and improve discipline, because children know that parents and teachers are on the same page.

A strong body of research shows that students do better in school and in life when their parents are engaged in their education. Evaluations of home visits demonstrate a range of positive outcomes, including improved home-school communication, improved teacher relationships with students, and improved student motivation and learning.

“Through home visits, teachers are able to better understand their students and set goals focused on the hopes and dreams parents have for their child,” Christine Rey, Garfield Elementary teacher, said. “I’ve done over 30 home visits this year, and each one has been a positive and valuable experience. Parents really are the key to our success as teachers, so it’s important to have good relationships with them.”

Teachers typically conduct two home visits per year per student. The first visit in the summer/fall focuses on building relationships with families, and the second visit in the spring emphasizes student goals and progress. Participation for schools and individual teachers, as well as families, is voluntary and teachers are compensated for their time. Teachers conduct home visits in pairs, and schedule the visits in advance at an agreed-upon time and location.

“Building a relationship with my child’s teacher has made me an equal partner in my child’s education,” Aquila Watson, DCPS parent, said. “While I was unsure at first why the teacher wanted to visit my home, getting to know Ms. Rey, and sharing information about my child’s progress in school has been so helpful to me as a parent. I now come to the school all the time, and serve on my school’s governance body.”

In 2011, Flamboyan has partnered with PTHVP to train 407 teachers at 47 D.C. public and public charter schools. Participants’ responses to the training were overwhelmingly positive, with 92 percent of teachers rating the training “helpful” or “very helpful.” Eighty-five percent of the teachers trained said that they planned to conduct home visits after taking the training.

Teachers in Flamboyan Foundation’s five partner schools have conducted over 540 visits to date. By the end of this school year, Flamboyan estimates that approximately 500 D.C. teachers will be trained in the home visit model. PTHVP will deliver a “Train the Trainers” to select D.C. parents and teachers in spring 2012 in order to build local capacity to deliver home visit trainings.

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About Flamboyan Foundation

Flamboyan Foundation is a private, family foundation focused on improving educational outcomes for children in Pre-K-12 public schools in Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico.