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Ballmer Group Grant to Crystal Stairs, Inc., Advances Equity and Economic Mobility for African American Child Care Providers

Los Angeles, CA – A \$1,300,000 grant from the Ballmer Group to Crystal Stairs, Inc. (CSI) is lighting the path toward equity and economic mobility for African American child care providers in South LA and paving a bright future for black children and families with increased quality of care and education.

Newly cultivated African American Provider Network (AAPN), aims to engage and empower African American (AA) Early Care and Education (ECE) workforce through a critical support infrastructure that will provide a safe space and opportunity for equitable access to professional development, apprenticeship programs, and strategies for sustaining and expanding high quality child care services for children, families and communities.

“AAPN is addressing the unique challenges African American providers face to help keep their doors open and strengthen their impact in our community. This is needed as we continue to work towards an equitable recovery from the pandemic,” said Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chair, Holly J. Mitchell, who is a strong advocate and supporter of the AAPN.

“African-American ECE providers have played a critical role in embracing and lifting up Black families in South LA, and we are excited to support those providers with the professional development and tools they need to continue and expand their excellent work,” said Kim Pattillo Brownson, Ballmer Group-LA’s Director of Strategy & Policy.

As the original caregivers to America’s children, African American providers are essential to our nation’s children. “Quality ECE sets up young children for a lifetime of success and economic mobility, and we are thrilled to support Crystal Stairs and African American educators in providing South LA’s children with a fair and equitable start,” said Nina Revoyr, Executive Director, Ballmer Group-LA.

On the heels of the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and more, we need to look no further than our own communities to find current examples that spotlight more than 400 years of injustice for black people in America.

With a shared equity agenda along with the Ballmer Group, this program removes barriers caused by structural and systemic racism and creates pathways to access and complete college coursework to grow and strengthen their businesses, as well as entrepreneurial opportunities designed to generate increased revenue.

“The AAPN is a unique and innovative partnership between philanthropy, a community based organization and government joined together to help address serious equity issues in marginalized communities of color in South LA with intentionality,” said Jackie Majors, Chief Executive Officer

of Crystal Stairs. “With a shared equity agenda along with the Ballmer Group and LA County Supervisor Holly Mitchell, Crystal Stairs and the AAPN will serve as a model to advance economic mobility and recovery for African American child care providers.”

“It’s time we step up for our providers who have stood in the gap during our toughest moments. I am proud to welcome Crystal Stairs’ African American Provider Network to the Second Supervisorial District,” said Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chair, Holly J. Mitchell.

Additionally, the AAPN will contribute to the larger racial equity policy agenda the LA County Board of Supervisors envisioned. Working in partnership with Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell through her motion addressing racial equity, and the LA County office for Anti-Racism, CSI and the AAPN are pioneers in equity policy initiatives.

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Crystal Stairs, Inc. is a Los Angeles-based nonprofit child care and development organization, with a proven track record of promoting programs that support child care providers and provides comprehensive child development services for low-income children and their families.

Learn more about Crystal Stairs, Inc. at www.crystalstairs.org.