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STAMP Program Offers Philly High Schoolers Free Access to 12 of the City's Best Museums

October 4, 2013. Philadelphia, PA. -- At an event at the African American Museum in Philadelphia, the Greater Cultural Alliance unveiled its newest program before an enthusiastic crowd of more than 250 teenagers. **STAMP: the Virginia and Harvey Kimmel Family Teen Program** will now offer these teens and any other high-school aged teenager living in Philadelphia with one year of free admission to 12 of the city's top museums and attractions.



Students who enroll in STAMP (Students at Museums in Philly) receive the **STAMP Pass**, a card that they can present to get free out-of-school-time admission to some of the city's top museums and cultural venues. In just a few days more than 1,300 teens have signed up for the pass (as of 10/8/13) which is available at no charge to teens age 14 to 19 who live in the city of Philadelphia. Teens can register for the STAMP Pass by visiting www.phillystampass.org.

Participating museums and cultural institutions:

African American Museum in Philadelphia

National Constitution Center

Barnes Foundation

National Museum of American Jewish History

Eastern State Penitentiary

Penn Museum

Fabric Workshop and Museum

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Institute of Contemporary Art

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Mutter Museum

Philadelphia Zoo

“STAMP reflects the cultural community’s collective effort to invest in the youth of Philadelphia,” explains Cultural Alliance Interim Executive Director **Michael Norris**. “Our goal is to make sure that Philly teens have access to more of the city’s incredible arts and culture and for them to think of arts and culture as something fun and interesting they can do in their leisure time.”

Participating museums and cultural institutions will each hold one monthly event throughout the year where teens will have an opportunity to participate in a hands-on activity, socialize with their peers and become acquainted with some of Philadelphia’s amazing cultural assets.

“These are not field trips,” explained **Alison Zeidman** of the Cultural Alliance. “The STAMP program is about breaking down barriers so that teens see these museums and cultural attractions as welcoming places where they can go on their free time, either on their own or with friends.”

In addition to the pass, the program has an online component with a [website](#) where teens can discover other cultural opportunities available to them, find out about job and internship opportunities and get invites to exclusive events for STAMP passholders. The website is a platform to promote the teen programs of STAMP’s community partners. STAMP also has a lively presence on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

To help create a program that resonates with Philadelphia teens, the Cultural Alliance established the [STAMP Teen Council](#), a group of 11 high school students who have played an instrumental role in the program’s development and branding. The council will continue to be a crucial part of the program, blogging on the website, posting to social networks and helping to promote the program to their friends and fellow students.

Each of the STAMP Teen Council members have written blog posts about their first trips to one of the museums on the [phillystamp.org](#) website. Philadelphia High School for the Creative and Performing Arts [student Jordan Deal](#) discussed his experience at the Institute of Contemporary Art:

The artwork that was displayed really transported my mind to a state that expanded my imagination. With the interesting and unusual display of artwork, it gave the atmosphere an interesting twist, adding a lot of excitement to the calm mood. At the time I visited, the displays included all sorts of art, from very creative masks to unique pieces of jewelry to huge installation pieces that surround the viewer as they swim along the walls. I was constantly intrigued by each area of the museum. It was pretty interesting to see the artwork displayed in so many different forms here. I really enjoyed the tour that I was lucky to have and I am excited to visit back! I had a lot of fun!

The Cultural Alliance has recruited more than [40 community partners](#) for the program from the city’s youth-serving agencies to ensure that as many teens as possible are aware of STAMP and get the pass, especially underserved and at-risk teens.

“The cultural community in Philadelphia – institutions like museums and historical attractions – is a crucial partner for the City in our effort to provide quality programming for students outside of school,”

explained **Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter**. "The STAMP program meets a critical need by providing teens with valuable cultural experiences and activities that are both fun and safe."

STAMP has been more than a year in the planning and is generously underwritten by Virginia and Harvey Kimmel and by grants from the John S. & James L. Knight Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Philadelphia Foundation's Fund for Children. The launch event on October 4 is generously sponsored by Wells Fargo. In year one of the program, 12 of Philadelphia's most popular museums and cultural institutions are participating. The Cultural Alliance hopes to expand the program in future years until all arts and culture is free and accessible for Philadelphia's high school students.

STAMP fills a void in the kinds of cultural programs available to Philadelphia's older youth. Many cultural education programs target younger children when they are first developing cultural preferences, lifelong learning habits and crucial social skills. With far fewer programs aimed at high schoolers and older teens, and cuts to public education and afterschool programs, older teens are falling through the cracks.

[Click here](#) to download print quality versions of the photos below.



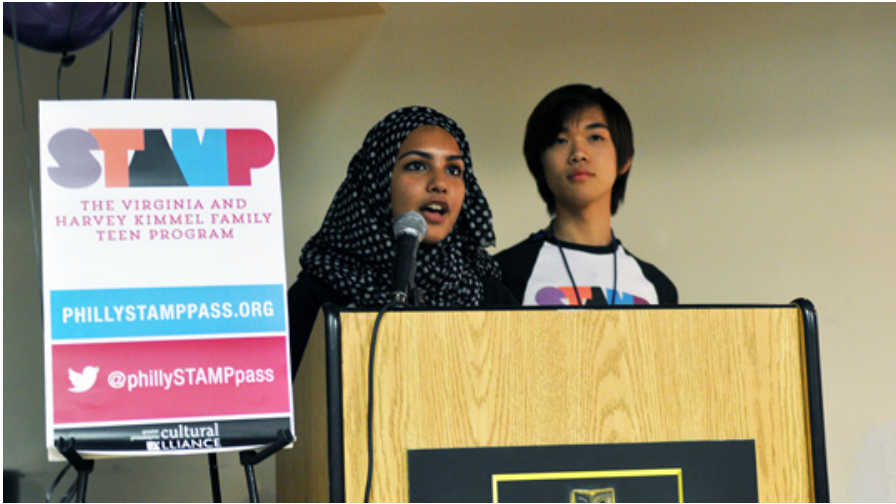
Students gather for the launch of STAMP on October 4, 2013 at the African American Museum in Philadelphia.



Members of Girls Rock Philly sign in for the STAMP launch event at the African American Museum in Philadelphia.



Pennsylvania Representative Cherelle Parker speaking at the STAMP launch event on October 4, 2013



STAMP Teen Council members Myrna Yousuf and Teyin Tsing speak at the October 4 launch event at the African American Museum in Philadelphia.



Philadelphia Academies President and Philadelphia First Lady Lisa Nutter speaking at the STAMP Launch event on Friday, October 4, 2013 at the African American Museum in Philadelphia.



STAMP donors Harvey and Virginia Kimmel addressing the crowd at the launch event on October 4, 2013.



Members of Girls Rock Philly perform at the STAMP launch event.



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