



Art Studio Miami

Empowering Young Minds

7230 NW Miami Ct Studio #5, Purple Door, Miami, FL 33150
p.786.317.8118 – Info@ArtStudioMiami.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 21, 2010

Contact: Beth Degi, Art Studio Miami

Phone: (301) 448-8701

Email: Beth@ArtStudioMiami.org

PRESS RELEASE

Little Haiti Based Non-Profit Responds to Meek's Call for Leadership

Art Studio Miami Increasing Capacity to Serve Youth Impacted by Haiti Earthquake

January 21, 2010, Miami, FL- Little Haiti based Art Studio Miami (ASM) is ramping up volunteer efforts in response to the anticipated influx of refugee children pouring into Miami from earthquake ravaged Haiti. ASM annually serves approximately 200 youth from the impoverished area of Little Haiti, and staff expect demand to increase dramatically in the coming months as children orphaned by the earthquake arrive in South Florida.

Kendrick Meek (D-FL) addressed news crews on Tuesday at the City of Miami's staging area for Haiti relief, located directly across the street from ASM. Meek called for local organizations to provide leadership and support during the long period of rebuilding.

"South Florida is in this for the long haul; this will be the center for the recovery. . . and we are going to need leadership and understanding," said Meek.

In response to Meek's appeal, ASM volunteers and staff have begun working around the clock to prepare for additional students in the coming months. An army of volunteer teaching artists and administrators have stepped up to provide holistic programming that will allow children impacted by the disaster to express their feelings through creative projects that prepare them for academic success.

"We must provide safe spaces where youth can heal and build solid foundations for better lives," said Art Studio Miami Founder and lead volunteer, Rachel Hughes.

Since 2007, ASM has served over 500 youth from Little Haiti and Overtown using creative, art based projects to nurture students' creative thinking abilities and prepare them for classroom settings and job situations. The organization partners with professional artists and community leaders to provide students with mentors and concrete tools to remain in school, and gain stable employment after graduation. Programs incorporate yoga, meditation, and deep breathing to help students develop positive ways to address the distressing living situations they face daily.

"In the wake of this disaster, people are forgetting that many Haitian people who have already immigrated to Miami are in desperately impoverished conditions, living below the poverty level, which in several cases means homelessness, no running water, and little to no food or water," said Hughes.

According to Hughes, many of the youth served at ASM are struggling to obtain an education due to language barriers and health issues from lack of water, food and clean living conditions.

Hughes is calling on the Miami business and philanthropic communities to provide financial support and supplies for youth being served at Art Studio Miami. **Donations of non perishable food, bottled water, and funding are being accepted to offset the costs of increasing programming.** Donations can be made at www.ASMHelpLittleHaiti.org or by calling the ASM office at 786-317-8118.



Art Studio Miami empowers youth to lead prosperous futures through creative, holistic project based learning.

Art Studio Miami is a 501(c)3 Organization. All donations made to Art Studio, Inc. are tax deductible.

ArtStudioMiami.org - p.786.317.8118 - info@ArtStudioMiami.org - 7230 NW Miami Ct. Studio#5, Purple Door, Miami, FL 33150

ASM volunteers are also on the ground in Haiti. A team of ASM volunteers left for Port-au-Prince early Tuesday morning to assisting directly with the relief efforts on the ground. Nearly all of the students served at ASM have family still in Haiti.

Art Studio Miami uses art as a tool for educational, emotional, and career development. Through the arts, we teach life skills to prepare students for successful futures. Youth in foster care, homeless situations, and extreme poverty depend on us to provide tools that empower them to gain stable employment and contribute to our community.

Art Studio Miami programs go far beyond art - they are lifelines out of poverty. According to the Florida 11th Judicial Circuit Court's Juvenile Justice Board, one in three youth in the area served by ASM will be imprisoned by age twenty-one. Our programs focus on dismantling the 'Cradle to Prison Pipeline' by providing students with mentors and tools to create a future free from the crippling effects of poverty.

###



Art Studio Miami.org
Check out our video at
www.blip.tv/file/2124377



Art Studio Miami empowers youth to lead prosperous futures through creative, holistic project based learning.

Art Studio Miami is a 501(c)3 Organization. All donations made to Art Studio, Inc. are tax deductible.

ArtStudioMiami.org - p.786.317.8118 - info@ArtStudioMiami.org - 7230 NW Miami Ct. Studio#5, Purple Door, Miami, FL 33150