

MEDIA CONTACT:

Peter Bramante
FirstWorks
401-421-4278
peter@first-works.org

High Resolution Images Available

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 19, 2014

FirstWorks Arts Learning Programs Powered by National Grid

PROVIDENCE, RI – The collaboration between [FirstWorks](http://FirstWorks.org) and National Grid continues to build momentum with world-class performing arts programs in Providence, RI. The effort focuses on engaging students in underserved cities and towns across the state with exceptional artists and arts learning programs that inspire creativity and provide youth with skills for future success. Two special projects with tap dance legend Savion Glover and Wynton Marsalis' Jazz at Lincoln Center highlight FirstWorks' year-long arts learning programs that now reach over 2,600 students across the state.

"We are honored to continue our support of FirstWorks' programming and to help fuel cultural conversation, intelligent discussions and lively interactions with world-class performing artists," said Timothy F. Horan, president of National Grid in Rhode Island. "National Grid is committed to serving the needs of the community and giving back to the neighborhoods we serve. We are thrilled to be working with FirstWorks to help bring local, national, and international performing artists directly to Rhode Island audiences – to perform, engage, and connect."

The arts learning affiliation between FirstWorks and National Grid kicked off with a workshop by Broadway tap phenomenon **Savion Glover** for over 480 students. Glover shared an afternoon of personal reflection and ideas around music, tap dance, and life-long learning with participating students.

Also highlighted was a unique program integrating Jazz and social studies inspired by Pulitzer Prize-winning big-band leader **Wynton Marsalis** and his innovative model of combining performance with teaching. Over 900 students from schools in Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls, Barrington, and Warwick worked with **Jazz at Lincoln Center** musicians and local teaching artists to develop their own projects using music, dance, theatre, art, and literature. **Jazz at Lincoln Center** musicians visited Providence in January 2014 with a series of mini-concerts and workshops, marking the second year of an on-going partnership with FirstWorks. Built around the arts learning theme of "The Jazz Age and the Harlem Renaissance", the project culminated with a special performance by participating students on June 3, 2014.

“National Grid is instrumental in supporting the extraordinary growth in FirstWorks arts learning, which has expanded from reaching 125 students in 2009 to helping 2,600 students learn through the arts in 2014. Their support, along with our other devoted sponsors, helps to provide once-in-a-lifetime experiences of direct engagement with master artists, who act as role models for young people across our community,” said Kathleen Pletcher, Executive Artistic Director, FirstWorks. “For many of the students who are participating, this represents their first opportunity to experience performing arts and to engage with artists through workshops, conversations, and online experiences.”

Download high resolution image [here](#).

About National Grid

National Grid (LSE: NG; NYSE:NGG) is an electricity and gas company that connects consumers to energy sources through its networks. The company is at the heart of one of the greatest challenges facing our society - to create new, sustainable energy solutions for the future and developing an energy system that underpins economic prosperity in the 21st century. National Grid holds a vital position at the center of the energy system and it ‘joins everything up’.

In the northeast US, we connect more than seven million gas and electric customers to vital energy sources, essential for our modern lifestyles. In Great Britain, we run the gas and electricity systems that our society is built on, delivering gas and electricity across the country.

National Grid delivers electricity to approximately 3.3 million customers in Massachusetts, New York and Rhode Island. It is the largest distributor of natural gas in northeastern U.S., serving approximately 3.4 million customers in New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

For more information please visit our website: www.nationalgridus.com.

Follow us on [Twitter](#), Watch us on [You Tube](#), Friend us on [Facebook](#), Find our photos on [Instagram](#).

About FirstWorks

FirstWorks is a non-profit arts organization that builds the cultural, educational, and economic vitality of our community through world-class performing arts and education programs. Since 2004, FirstWorks has offered Rhode Islanders access to some of the most exciting artists of our time including Yo-Yo Ma & the Silk Road Ensemble, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Wynton Marsalis, Joffrey Ballet, and the master artists of Pakistan through the Caravanserai project (2011-12). Beginning 10 years ago with an unprecedented collaboration with Providence’s Department of Art, Culture + Tourism, FirstWorks has produced 22 groundbreaking arts festivals, attracted more than 160,000 participants, presented over 361 international artists and innovators, engaged more than 100 nonprofit community organizations and schools, and grown into a multidimensional arts organization recognized with 17 National Endowment for the Arts grants. In fall 2012, FirstWorks partnered with the City of Providence to present the inaugural FirstWorks Festival: On the Plaza, leading a consortium of 18 organizations to create an event that drew 40,000 people into downtown Providence. In July 2013, the City of Providence and FirstWorks were named recipients of a second NEA Our Town grant to support a community design effort to create a cultural corridor in downtown Providence along Washington Street, and to establish the FirstWorks Festival: On the Plaza as a biennial signature event in Providence. Visit www.first-works.org to learn more.

###