

For Immediate Release

Media Contact:

Jeremy Gaucher
Project Coordinator
The Liberty School @ NTC
libertyschool@ntcfoundation.org
(619) 573-9303

NTC Foundation Launches New Arts & Culture Education Program for At-Risk Youth

San Diego, Calif. – (November 27, 2007) The NTC Foundation has launched **The Liberty School**, an innovative new program that provides at-risk San Diego school children with arts, culture, and science classes. Students attend classes with the resident arts and culture groups at NTC Promenade, the new Civic, Arts and Culture District in Liberty Station at the former Naval Training Center in Point Loma. During this first semester, resident groups are providing instruction in dance, art, karate, and science to San Diego students each month.

“Where hundreds of thousands of young Navy recruits once trained, we are now transforming a storied military facility into a civilian arts and culture epicenter where students have the opportunity to try new things, be creative and to share those experiences with one another,” said Alan Ziter, Executive Director of the NTC Foundation. “Already, in just two months, we are hearing from the instructors that this creative environment is helping challenged students see that school can be a place where they belong and can excel.”

The students currently attending classes at The Liberty School are 3rd graders from Dewey Elementary, a Point Loma school comprised of mostly children from military families, and 7th graders from the ALBA (Alternative Learning for Behavior and Attitude) Community Day School which services students in the San Diego City School district. Dewey students take classes one afternoon each week, while ALBA students attend Liberty School for a full week each month. As the program is further funded, additional student populations who are considered “at-risk” will be added.

The Liberty School students receive an innovative learning experience that enriches standards-based curriculum with project-based learning strategies using the rich resources of NTC’s 21 resident arts, culture and science organizations. Groups that are currently teaching the students are Jean Isaacs’ San Diego Dance Theater, Malashock Dance, US Karate Academy, California Space Grant Foundation, Quilt Visions, and ARTS: A Reason to Survive.

The name, ‘The Liberty School at NTC,’ was chosen not only because of its location at Liberty Station, but more importantly, the name reflects the programs philosophical underpinnings: offering students an approach to education that is less constrained than traditional approaches to public education – giving the students the opportunity to be more engaged in the educational process, addressing their individual learning styles and allowing them to explore new directions in their own lives.

The Liberty School curriculum has as a goal of fostering creativity. While arts and culture organizations are the largest block of current resident groups, there are a growing number of ecological, social, and science oriented groups moving into NTC. By focusing on creativity as the underlying and unifying theme, the school can offer a richer mix of educational opportunities to young people.

Students attending The Liberty School have a “home base” classroom in Historic Building 176, where for over 50 years Navy Recruits received the knowledge and skill required for the challenges of military duty. Here the Liberty School students meet each school day, eat lunch, and spend time engaging in more traditional instruction with their classroom teachers.

The NTC Foundation received a Community Reinvestment Act grant from San Diego National Bank to support the launch of this project.

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The Liberty School:

The mission of The Liberty School at NTC is to offer children and youth an alternative approach to their education that fosters creativity, addresses their unique learning styles and allows them to explore new directions in their own lives, and connects them to the community while exceeding public education standards. The school will show that combining the resources and talents of arts, culture and science organizations, professional teacher education, community resources and a beautiful setting improves education and promotes community involvement.

NTC Resident groups provide instruction in dance, visual art, music, theatre, science, math, language arts, and social studies. Resident groups education staff work working closely with classroom teachers to identify academic content standards and align curriculum with California Department of Education mandated standards. The Liberty School will conclude each semester of the school year with an open-studio showcase of student work to engage the community, families, and other students.

The NTC Foundation:

The NTC Foundation was established in 2000 to renovate this signature community asset and transform it into a place where “Innovative Experiences” will transform and inspire the lives for generations to come. NTC Promenade will be an engaging 28 acre creative district brimming with innovation, collaboration and celebration in an historic setting in the new mixed-use community of Liberty Station. The mixed-use community also includes new construction, including office space, hotels, single and multi-family residences and military homes, an education district, a retail district, a recreation district, and a 46-acre bayside park.

The NTC Foundation recently completed a \$26 million renovation to 6 of its 26 buildings and is now making plans for the next phase of the development as its first 21 resident groups work to develop a creative collaborative community in the Civic, Arts and Cultural District.

The mission of the NTC Foundation is to “enrich the lives of San Diegans as we renovate 26 historic buildings at the former Naval Training Center to create, facilitate and operate a broad-based complex focused on experiencing the arts, culture, science and technology of innovation, exploration and creativity that are the hallmark of the San Diego region.” www.ntcfoundation.org

ALBA Community Day School:

ALBA (Alternative Learning for Behavior and Attitude) Community Day School services students in the San Diego City School district who have violated the Zero Tolerance Policy. It was introduced in 1997 to provide continued schooling to expelled students who historically had a high dropout rate.

The school's main purpose is to help a student become stabilized in terms of both education and behavior in order for them to successfully transition to their traditional comprehensive school. The community day school provides a high-quality educational program that builds academic skills, and fosters social and emotional growth.

ALBA offers the core courses required for graduation. Class sizes are small, ranging from 10-20 students per teacher. Students are required to participate in both an academic and a behavioral and social/emotional curriculum. All students participate in counseling and decision-making sessions and coursework. The ALBA staff works diligently with families and numerous support agencies to prepare the students to successfully return to a regular school setting. Support agencies include Social Advocates for Youth (SAY), YMCA, San Diego Parks and Recreation, Red Cross, Urban League, and the San Diego Museum of Art.
