

## THE INSTITUTE OF MUSIC FOR CHILDREN PRESENTS AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE



Alysia Souder, Executive Director of the Institute of Music for Children Inc. in Elizabeth, NJ has been invited to be on a panel with The Elizabeth and Baretts O. Benjamin Charitable Foundation at the Council on Foundation's 2012 Family Philanthropy Conference in Miami, Florida in February 2012. Ms. Souder will participate in a workshop entitled *Engaging Youth and Building Community through Music and the Arts*. This panel will discuss the challenges and successes of using music and the arts programs to engage youth and change communities in transformative ways. They will also explore how effective models can be transported to other communities and

how funders can support and scale such efforts for broader impact.

The Benjamin Foundation provides funding to organizations across the country that are helping to transform the lives of young women, and has committed funding to the Institute for the fifth consecutive year. The Institute was chosen to participate in the conference as it has been identified as a "model organization" that is doing exceptional work in arts and community development. Its Membership Program actively involves families in the Institute as volunteers and fundraisers and in return families benefit from subsidized tuition and access to scholarships. With events, activities and a program structure that encourages family involvement and community responsibility, the Institute is making a difference in the lives of 800+ youth annually in the greater Elizabeth area.

The Institute, which is located on the Third Westminster Presbyterian Church campus, started as a mission program of the church 17 years ago. The Institute incorporated into a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization in 2004. The Institute and Third Westminster Presbyterian Church remain fully connected. The Institute receives a substantial grant from the church, provides low-cost rental space and members of the church serve on the Board of Directors.

Institute Executive Director, Alysia Souder has 18 years of experience in arts education. Actively involved in the development of arts education on a statewide level, Ms. Souder serves on the NJ Arts Education Collective, the NJ Arts Education Partnership, and is a member of the leadership council of the Newark Arts Education Roundtable. In June 2008 she was awarded Outstanding Arts Educator by the Arts Council of the Morris Area.



---

THE INSTITUTE OF MUSIC FOR CHILDREN, INC. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) arts organization located in Elizabeth, NJ. The Institute offers year-round instruction in the arts including instrumental music, voice, dance, visual arts and drama to children ages three to eighteen. The Institute features an extensive summer arts program that hires and trains local teenagers to serve as teacher assistants and mentors to the children studying at the Institute..



At the heart of The Institute of Music's mission is to create H.A.R.M.O.N.Y. – **H**elping **A**chieve **R**esponsible **M**otivated **O**ptimistic **N**eighborhood **Y**outh and it believes that the most effective way of doing this is to provide in-depth arts experiences that aid in the personal and academic development of its youth. For more information about the Institute contact us at 908-469-1211, or visit us online at [www.instituteofmusic.org](http://www.instituteofmusic.org)