

Foresters, KaBOOM! Volunteers Revitalize Bradenton Community with New Playground

Written by Australian Business

Playground to enhance family well-being

BRADENTON, FL, Oct. 19, 2013 /PRNewswire/ - A dream is now a reality for children in Bradenton as their drawings were turned into a new playground today. In less than eight hours, the play space was built with the help of more than 200 volunteers from ForestersTM, Visible Men Academy (VMA) and non-profit KaBOOM!. The new playground will serve 22,500 children and their families in the community for years to come.

"Foresters believes in providing opportunities for families to spend quality time together," said Bruce Burak, Foresters National Sales Manager. "This playground will help Visible Men Academy fulfill its purpose to provide outstanding education in a nurturing environment and provide a safe, central gathering place for families throughout the neighborhood."

Planning for the playground began at a Design Day event held in August when local children and community leaders met with organizers from KaBOOM! and Foresters to design their dream playground. The children's drawings were then used to create the final playground design.

Since 2006, Foresters has invested over \$7 million with KaBOOM! with almost 100 playgrounds built or planned across the U.S. and Canada

. Over their 15 year lifespan, these playgrounds will provide more than 2.6 million children and their families with an opportunity to spend quality time together. Foresters is a KaBOOM! National Partner and a founding member of the KaBOOM! Leadership Circle - a group of organizations providing long-term guidance and support to KaBOOM! and its mission.

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"We are thrilled and honored to construct a playground at Visible Men Academy," said Neil Phillips

Visible Men Academy Principal. "The playground will be a wonderfully exciting safe and fun zone for our students - they have been waiting anxiously for this great play space! We are also pleased that the Pride Park community residents can benefit, as well. It is especially meaningful to us that so many members from the community have been deeply involved from the outset of this effort. We are grateful for the enthusiastic participation, dedication, and support that we've received from each VMA family member, committee member, community leader and volunteer. We are also indebted to KaBOOM! for providing us this opportunity to contribute to our community. Finally, we are enormously thankful to Foresters for their incredibly generous contribution and gift that will help to celebrate and encourage play, which always improves lives."

Thanks to the work of Foresters, Visible Men Academy and KaBOOM!, children and their families now have a 2,520 square-foot playground to call home that includes features such as a Slither Slide, Solar Climber and Swings.

A passionate advocate for family well-being, Foresters recently launched the Tech Timeout™ challenge, which encourages families to take a pledge to turn off all electronic devices for an hour a day for one week. For more details, visit techtimetype.com.

About Visible Men Academy The mission of VMA is to provide boys with outstanding academic, character, and social education in a nurturing school environment. The purpose is to deliver a high-quality educational experience that meets the specific needs of at-risk elementary and middle school aged boys through the collaborative efforts of administrators, teachers, parents, the broader community, and the students themselves. The VMA vision is to lead boys toward a realization of their innate strong character - boys who are family orientated, community conscious, and globally aware. VMA opened in August 2013

with an initial enrollment of approximately 200 students in Kindergarten through 2nd grades. VMA will grow to become a Kindergarten through 8th grade school, ultimately serving approximately 500 students. The all-boys population is a unique element of the school; adopted in order to meet boys' distinctive educational needs. For more information, please visit vmacademy.org.

About Foresters Foresters™ is a life insurance provider with a difference. The fraternal benefit society, founded in 1874, supports family well-being through quality products, unique

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member benefits and inspiring community activities. Foresters shares its financial strength with over one million members in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom

For more information, visit foresters.com

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About KaBOOM! KaBOOM! is the national non-profit dedicated to giving kids the childhood they deserve by bringing play to those who need it most. Children today spend less time playing outdoors than any previous generation, a fact that is having disastrous consequences on their health, achievement levels, and overall well-being. Social entrepreneur

Darell Hammond

founded non-profit KaBOOM! in 1996 in Washington, D.C.

with a vision of creating a great place to play within walking distance of every child in America because children need to play actively every day at home, in school and in their communities. Since then, KaBOOM! has mapped over 90,000 places to play, built more than 2,300 playgrounds, and successfully advocated for play policies in hundreds of cities across the country. KaBOOM! also provides communities with online tools to self-organize and take action to support play on both a local and national level. Hammond chronicles the founding of the organization and the importance of the cause of play in his

The

New York Times

Best Seller

[*KaBOOM!: A Movement to Save Play*](#)

, now out in paperback. The book details how businesses and communities can work together to save play for children across the country. All author proceeds support KaBOOM!.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C.

, KaBOOM! also has an office in San Mateo, Calif.

For more information, visit

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www.kaboom.org

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