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For Immediate Release

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Quality Early Learning Celebrated at Starry Starry Night Event

PROVIDENCE, RI, December 16, 2013 – BrightStars recently held its fifth annual Starry Starry Night event to recognize their participating child care centers, family child care and school-age programs for showing a commitment to quality by joining BrightStars. Community leaders gathered to celebrate more than 200 programs at the Providence Marriott on Wednesday, December 12, 2013.

BrightStars honored IBM with their Sixth Star Award. This year the Sixth Star Award recognizes the organization's generous support of quality child care, early learning, and school-age programs in Rhode Island. In the fall of 2012, IBM awarded a total of 43 Young Explorer™ computer learning units to 13 different BrightStars-rated, not-for-profit child care programs. Young Explorers are computers housed in brightly colored, kid-friendly Little Tikes furniture and equipped with award-winning educational software to help children learn and explore concepts in math, science and language. In 2013, IBM renewed their commitment to work with Rhode Island, and to date BrightStars is in the process of awarding an additional 50 Young Explorer Units to 17 additional sites around the state. To date, total value of IBM investment over two years is more than \$240,000.

"IBM is grateful to Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children and BrightStars for this award and recognition. We are very proud our partnership with RIAEYC and BrightStars on our KidSmart Early Learning program because it is providing new opportunities for children to explore concepts in math, science and language. IBM is dedicated to bridging the digital divide and building the skills that young students need to succeed in their

future education and their eventual careers,” said Cathleen Finn, New England Manager, Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs.

Speakers at the event included Anthony Maione, United Way of Rhode Island; Janice DeFrances, RI Department of Children, Youth & Families; Melissa Emidy, RI Department of Education; Sandra Powell, RI Department of Human Services; Joanne Dwyer, CVS Caremark Charitable Trust; and John Evans, IBM.

“This year we celebrate all BrightStars early learning programs and the work they do every day for children and families in their community. We also recognize our program funders like United Way of Rhode Island, CVS Caremark Charitable Trust, and the Department of Human Services who each have made long-term commitment to invest in results-driven systems building” said Tammy Camillo, Director of BrightStars.

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About BrightStars

BrightStars is managed by the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children (RIAEYC). BrightStars helps families in Rhode Island access quality child care, early learning, and school-age programs. Through our star rating system we help child care providers learn about best practices and apply them to the care children receive. BrightStars funders and partners include United Way of Rhode Island, CVS Caremark Charitable Trust, RI Department of Human Services, RI Department of Children, Youth & Families, RI Department of Education, RI Department of Health, and Rhode Island KIDS COUNT. Visit www.BrightStars.org for more information.