

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KIPP HOUSTON AND ZINA GARRISON ACADEMY PARTNER ON NEW FACILITY IN HOUSTON

*Zina Garrison Academy to be constructed in the Sunnyside neighborhood
where Zina Garrison grew up*

HOUSTON, TX (November 14, 2011) – KIPP Houston and the Zina Garrison Academy announced today a partnership to construct a tennis and educational complex at KIPP Houston’s Sunnyside Campus on Scott Street in Houston, TX. The Zina Garrison Academy has a history of success and growth with its after school, summer tutoring, life skills, community service and tennis programs. The KIPP partnership will allow the Academy to reach more underserved youth with an emphasis on the Sunnyside neighborhood, close to where Zina Garrison grew up and honed her tennis and life skills with Coach John Wilkerson at MacGregor Park.

Benefits of the new Zina Garrison Academy (ZGA) at KIPP Houston include:

- Growth and expansion of all ZGA programs including health and fitness, life skills, community service, academics and tennis instruction
- Teaching tennis and life skills to KIPPsters as part of the KIPP physical education curriculum
- After school and summer programming for KIPP students in addition to ZGA participants
- Relationship with KIPP Honor Society for ZGA students
- Continued emphasis on developing a well-rounded child with KIPP’s standards of 51% character, 49% academics, and grit and zest to be successful in the competitive world and beyond
- Use of the facility for recreational use by the surrounding community
- Tennis play days, clinics and tournaments for the community

With this partnership, the Zina Garrison Academy will begin the process of site analysis and preparation, soil evaluation, design work and engineering. Phase I will include ten tennis courts and a temporary educational facility while Phase II will include a permanent educational facility and additional tennis courts. The ZGA will develop community and business partners to help fund the capital needed to construct the new facility. Construction is anticipated to begin by early 2013.

“The Zina Garrison Academy views success in lifetime achievement in our children,” stated Zina Garrison Academy Executive Director Linda Elliott. “Our new partnership with KIPP Houston is a huge victory towards transforming the lives of many underserved youth of Houston.”

KIPP Co-founder and superintendent of KIPP Houston, Mike Feinberg stated, “We are honored to share our campus with the Zina Garrison Academy and excited about the opportunity to share the courts and teach tennis to our Sunnyside students.”

The partnership has also made an impact on Houston’s own First Lady Barbara and President George H.W. Bush. “We are so pleased that two organizations that we know and love will be working together,” stated Barbara and George Bush. “The Zina Garrison Academy and KIPP Houston have separately made such huge impacts on their students and their families, and together will do great things.”

About KIPP/KIPP Houston

KIPP, or Knowledge Is Power Program, was co-founded by Teach For America alumni Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin in Houston in 1994. KIPP has grown to a national network of 109 public schools in 20 states and the District of Columbia, serving more than 32,000 students. KIPP schools are recognized for narrowing the achievement gap in public education and putting underserved students on the path to college. KIPP Houston currently operates 20 schools and serves nearly 8,000 students in the city’s high-need communities. Ninety-eight percent of KIPP Houston students are African-American or Latino/Hispanic, and 90 percent qualify for the free or reduced price meals program. Since the first KIPP school opened in Houston in 1995, 90 percent of KIPP students, tracked from the 8th grade, have matriculated to college. To learn more, visit www.kipphouston.org.

About Zina Garrison

Raised in the Sunnyside Community of Houston, Zina Garrison began her tennis experience at the age of ten at John Wilkerson's free tennis program at MacGregor Park. Zina took advantage of these tennis lessons fused with personal guidance that kept her engaged in tennis and surrounded by positive adult mentors. Zina's hard work and perseverance paid off when she became the #1 Girl's Junior Player in the World in 1981. Shortly afterwards, Zina turned pro, with John Wilkerson as her full-time coach, and she ultimately achieved a ranking of #4 in the world.

About The Zina Garrison Academy

The Zina Garrison Academy is dedicated to teaching life skills, promoting community service, providing positive role models, strengthening the educational opportunities and developing the tennis skills of Houston's diverse youth population. Founded by Zina Garrison and John Wilkerson in 1993, the Zina Garrison Academy has made a positive impact on over 20,000 children and continues to grow its programs and participation. For more information, visit www.zinagarrison.org.

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