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BRIGHT START RIGHT START[®] LAUNCHES IN FORT WAYNE

FORT WAYNE, Ind., Sept. 20, 2012 – Children are natural scientists, constantly exploring their world and asking “why”. It’s the perfect time to introduce young children to science so they may understand more about their world and develop positive attitudes toward science once they are old enough to go to school. The challenge for pre-kindergarten teachers is having the right resources to teach children about science in a way that engages young learners.

Indiana Michigan Power, through the AEP Foundation, partnered with Fort Wayne’s Early Childhood Alliance to introduce Right Start Bright Start[®] to the Fort Wayne area. Bright Start Right Start is an intensive program designed to help Pre-K teachers create memorable and engaging learning activities that fuel children’s fascination and wonder and develop a foundation for later success in K-12 science learning.

“Fort Wayne is the first city in our service area to benefit from this exciting program, thanks to the AEP Foundation,” said Kim Sabrosky, community relations manager for Indiana Michigan Power. “Bright Start Right Start has been introduced in other parts of the AEP service area with tremendous success and we are confident that it will catch on here too.”

About 15 teachers participated in the first training sessions at the Early Childhood Development offices from Sept. 18 – 21.

“We are very pleased to be partnering with I&M and the AEP Foundation to host this important program,” said Madeleine Baker, executive director for Early Childhood Alliance. “The Bright Start Right Start Program is a natural fit for our mission to build better futures for young children by promoting and providing quality early childhood education and services for families, early childhood professionals and the community.”

During Bright Start Right Start sessions, participants experience and discuss hands-on physical science activities involving concepts such as magnetism, electricity, electrical safety, force and motion, temperature, night and day, environment and energy. The sessions are designed to increase Pre-K educators' confidence in leading science activities. Participating teachers receive instructional kits that contain activities presented in the workshop that can be used back in the classroom.

Kelli Shresberry, director for the Teaching and Learning Collaborative (TLC), the organization that administers the program for the AEP Foundation, is leading the introductory sessions in Fort Wayne. "Helping teachers be more confident about teaching science to preschoolers can have long-reaching effects," said Shresberry.

Participants are asked to present Right Start Bright Start content and activities to their administrators and teaching colleagues. TLC reports that each workshop could impact 30 teachers who on average would reach 1,350 students and 2,700 adults each year.

Shresberry added, "Who knows if some of those preschoolers might be the ones who invent new energy technologies for the future because a teacher knew how to introduce a love of science? That's what makes my job so rewarding."

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Indiana Michigan Power (I&M) is headquartered in Fort Wayne, and serves more than 582,000 customers in Michigan and Indiana. It operates 3,595 MW of coal-fired generation in Indiana, 2,110 MW of nuclear generation in Michigan and 22 MW of hydro generation in both states. The company also provides its customers 150 MW of purchased wind generation.

I&M is a unit of American Electric Power (NYSE: AEP), which is one of the largest electric utilities in the United States, delivering electricity to more than 5 million customers in 11 states. AEP ranks among the nation's largest generators of electricity, owning more than 38,000 megawatts of generating capacity in the U.S. AEP also owns the nation's largest electricity transmission system, a nearly 39,000-mile network that includes more 765 kilovolt extra-high voltage transmission lines than all other U.S. transmission systems combined. AEP's transmission system directly or indirectly serves about 10 percent of the electricity demand in the Eastern Interconnection, the interconnected transmission system that covers 38 eastern and central U.S. states and eastern Canada, and approximately 11 percent of the electricity demand in ERCOT, the transmission system that covers much of Texas. AEP's utility units operate as AEP Ohio, AEP Texas, Appalachian Power (in Virginia and West Virginia), AEP Appalachian Power (in Tennessee), Indiana Michigan Power, Kentucky Power, Public Service Company of Oklahoma, and Southwestern Electric Power Company (in Arkansas, Louisiana and east Texas). AEP's headquarters are in Columbus, Ohio.

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