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Bronx Story Team Caps Off Storytelling and Writing Program on November 9th

(Bronx, NY – November 14, 2013) The **Bronx Story Team**, a small group of Bronx youth led by storyteller **Rick Patrick**, capped off a month-long storytelling and writing program with a performance on November 9th. This public celebration marked the fifth Saturday afternoon gathering for the program and was held in the lobby of a **Chestnut Holdings** building located in Mount Hope. The free workshops were led by the **Bronx Council on the Arts** (BCA) and sponsored by Chestnut Holdings as part of a commitment to bring arts, culture and literacy closer to home for children in the Bronx.

“Story is the heart of who we are as humans. We all want and need to be heard. This is especially true of children, who develop self-esteem and communication strategies from story-telling. So, it was especially moving to see these kids pour their energy into their stories about the circus, about a trip to the Dominican Republic, about a day at school,” said **Maria Romano**, Director of the **Bronx Writers Center**, the Bronx Council on the Arts division that develops literacy and writing projects.

“The Bronx Council on the Arts is passionate about literacy at a local level, and Chestnut Holdings wanted to provide a means to bring these programs to kids in the neighborhood,” said **Jonathan Wiener**, President of Chestnut Holdings. “BCA’s partnership with Chestnut is the first its kind that we have seen in residential buildings in the Bronx. These children are eager for creative expression and Chestnut is happy to offer them an opportunity to share their experiences in the Bronx, a neighborhood that we are proud to be a part of.”

BCA developed the Bronx Story Team with the input and support of Chestnut Holdings as a free 5-week, 10-hour (total) special project for local kids, ages 10 and up. Every effort was made to accommodate participants and make the program easy and enjoyable – the program was local, free and in the lobby of a neighborhood building, where the building manager arranged tables and chairs and provided snacks each week.

The **Bronx Council on the Arts** celebrates its 50th year as a private, non-profit membership organization that is the official cultural agency of Bronx County. Recognized nationally as a leading arts service organization in providing cultural services and arts programs, BCA serves a multicultural constituency of almost 1.4 million residents. BCA provides an array of services to over 5,000 artists and more than 250 arts and community-based organizations.

Chestnut Holdings of New York is a family-owned real estate investment and property management firm with a 15-year track record of successful, responsible and reliable management. Chestnut is a hands-on owner-manager that acquires, manages and improves multifamily properties throughout New York City.

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(clockwise): Storyteller Rick Patrick helps the children of a Chestnut Holdings building in Mount Hope develop their experiences into written words; One inspired child writes his story while another shares his story with the team.

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