



## Civic Innovation Lab Grants \$60,000 to New Projects

### Initiatives target a web-based game and reality series

CLEVELAND (April 2009) - The Civic Innovation Lab recently awarded grants to two entrepreneurial initiatives, **Green Kids Rock** and **Got\*City GAME!**. Joy Roller, Executive Director of The Gordon Square Arts District, will mentor both initiatives for Lab.

With 20 million kids projected to be part of an online world by 2011, the internet is the perfect avenue to reach kids with the message of "going green."

Wendy Wercion, creator of **Green Kids Rock** and the latest Civic Innovation Lab champion, understands this. She received \$30,000 to create and build Green Kids Rock (GKR), a subscription-based online game targeted toward children ages 6-11. The game replicates real world environmental challenges such as recycling, conservation, and use of alternative fuels with players embarking on meaningful "virtual" expeditions via a created avatar. GKR will also help promote and support the local game development industry, a growing and profitable market.

Jennifer Thomas, director of the Lab, states, "Wendy is a dedicated and driven champion and is intent on building a company in the game writing industry."

Completing expeditions is the key to the mission and earning "Green Belt" status. Opportunities to go on expeditions are earned by completing quizzes and community service within GKR. Belt progressions are publicly acknowledged through a "Brag Board" allowing an avatar to proudly wear their color belt within the context of the game.

Green Kids Rock will partner with environmental nonprofits in return for accurate and engaging "expedition" content; these select nonprofit partners will benefit from a portion of subscriptions sold.

**Got\*City GAME!**, founded by Barbara Siss Oney and TL Champion, received \$30,000 to create a web-media series of reality-style city-focused scavenger hunts, where teams compete to show their city knowledge.

The web televised game will act as an 8-week radio/web media campaign that will drive college students and young professionals to a website to "vote" for their favorite competing teams. The website, <http://www.gotcitygame.tv/>, will be developed as a primary site or aggregator for young people to engage with education, employment, career, lifestyle and community aspects in Ohio. It will direct users to a host of resources and websites that currently exist.

Four teams of two participants, each sponsored by a local college or university, will compete to prove they have "City Game" - meaning they know the most about their city. The program will showcase aspects of the city that makes downtown living great in each of the featured Ohio cities, beginning with Cleveland. The team with the most votes/points will win downtown living for a year, including a free condo, tickets to theatre, sports, restaurants, nightclubs, etc.

"Barbara and TL have been extremely creative in their effort to come up with a product for talent attraction and retention," says Lab director Jennifer Thomas.