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The Air Liquide Foundation supports the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities in fight against illiteracy

press release

Contacts:

U.S Corporate Communications

George Smalley
+1 713 624 8021

Megan Cooper
+1 713 624 8049

Air Liquide Foundation

With a budget of €3 million over five years, the **Air Liquide Foundation** supports corporate philanthropy initiatives in **three areas**: scientific research for the preservation of the environment, scientific research for the improvement of the respiratory function and support for micro-initiatives for local development in the countries where the Group is present. Since it was established in 2008, the Foundation has supported 94 projects sponsored by 120 Group employees, located in 35 countries. www.fondationairliquide.com

Air Liquide in the U.S.

Air Liquide companies in the U.S. employ nearly **5,000** employees in over **200 locations**, and offer industrial gases, equipment and related services to customers in the large industries, industrial merchant, electronics and healthcare

Through its micro-initiative program in support of local development, the **Air Liquide Foundation** is supporting the **Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities (LEH)** in its fight against illiteracy in Louisiana.

The Air Liquide Foundation is supporting the rollout of **LEH's Prime Time Family Reading Time program** with a grant of **\$14,000** for educational materials. The materials will be distributed statewide, including the cities of Geismar and Norco, and will benefit approximately 1,000 children and their families in 2012.

In the state of Louisiana, **80 percent of 9-to-13-year-old students read below grade level**. This situation results in poor academic performance for these children and high drop out rates. Without the basics of a high school diploma, these young people will face greater challenges finding employment opportunities.

The Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, a not-for-profit organization based in New Orleans, engages in multiple community activities to reduce functional illiteracy. The **Prime Time program**, which focuses on at-risk children, has developed a **holistic approach that includes families**. Based on the principle that the cultural divide begins in the household, LEH and the Air Liquide Foundation have decided to make these families a priority.

The program consists of weekly meetings spread out over six to eight weeks, in libraries or schools. During these sessions, reading time is followed by group discussions on ethical or cultural subjects. A renewed interest in reading and culture is thus transmitted to the entire family, a critical factor for better academic results. Between 1991 and 2009, the LEH funded **5,000 Prime Time programs** in Louisiana, reaching out to over **20,000 participants**.

The Air Liquide Foundation provides opportunities for Group employees to get involved in community activities and to participate and help evaluate philanthropic projects supported by the Foundation. To that end, an Air Liquide employee is involved in this LEH project evaluation and follow-up.

Air Liquide is the world leader in gases for industry, health and the environment, and is present in 80 countries with 43,600 employees. Oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen and rare gases have been at the core of Air Liquide's activities since its creation in 1902. Using these molecules, Air Liquide continuously reinvents its business, anticipating the needs of current and future markets. The Group innovates to enable progress, to achieve dynamic growth and a consistent performance.

Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities

The Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities is a Louisiana non-profit organization dedicated to providing educational opportunities to all Louisianians. The Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities' mission is to provide all Louisianians with access to and an appreciation of their own rich, shared and diverse historical, literary and cultural heritage through grant-supported outreach programs, family literacy and adult reading initiatives, teacher professional development institutes, publications, film and radio documentaries, museum exhibitions, cultural tourism, public lectures, library projects, and other public humanities programming. www.leh.org

***Innovative technologies** that curb polluting emissions, lower industry's energy use, recover and reuse natural resources or develop the energies of tomorrow, such as hydrogen, biofuels or photovoltaic energy... Oxygen for hospitals, homecare, fighting nosocomial infections... Air Liquide combines many products and technologies to develop valuable applications and services not only for its customers but also for society.*

***A partner for the long term**, Air Liquide relies on employee commitment, customer trust and shareholder support to pursue its vision of sustainable, competitive growth. The **diversity** of Air Liquide's teams, businesses, markets and geographic presence provides a solid and sustainable base for its development and strengthens its ability to push back its own limits, conquer new territories and build its future.*

***Air Liquide explores the best that air can offer to preserve life, staying true to its sustainable development approach.** In 2010, the Group's revenues amounted to **€13.5 billion**, of which almost 80% were generated outside France. Air Liquide is listed on the Paris Euronext stock exchange (compartment A) and is a member of the CAC 40 and Dow Jones Euro Stoxx 50 indexes.*