



Kids Euro Festival Receives Distinguished Community Service Award from KEEN Greater DC

Award Recognizes Kids Euro Festival Dedication to Programming Offered for Special Needs Children

WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 20, 2015): **Kids Euro Festival** — the largest children’s performing arts festival of its kind in America — has received the 2015 KEEN Greater DC Community Service Award, in recognition of the Festival’s commitment to offer programming to special needs children.

Kids Euro Festival unites the 28 embassies of the European Union (EU) and more than 20 local and national cultural institutions to annually offer 125+ free cultural events — theater, puppets, music, magic, dance, films, stories, and more — for children and their families. Launched in 2008, Kids Euro Festival has reached over 150,000 culturally curious children and their parents, delivering a memorable “trip to Europe without a passport.”

Since 2010, Kids Euro Festival has also offered KEEN Day, a day-long cultural experience for special needs children, their families, and their companions. On the grounds of the French Embassy’s La Maison Française, visitors have watched performances and movies, enjoyed storytelling, and participated in crafts and other activities in an environment that is both welcoming and understanding of this unique audience.

The 2015 KEEN Greater DC Community Service Award was presented during the KEENFest 2015 Gala, which was held on November 7 at the Washington Capital Hilton Hotel. The honor was jointly accepted by the Delegation of the European Union to the United States, and the European American Cultural Foundation (E-ACF), the respective presenter and organizer of Kids Euro Festival.

James Barbour — Head of Press and Public Diplomacy for the EU Delegation — emphasized that, while the European Union addresses issues of diplomacy and foreign policy, it is fundamentally concerned with people, and in that capacity, its presentation of Kids Euro Festival is very much aligned with the EU’s mission abroad. Kimberley Heatherington — Executive Director of the E-ACF — said KEEN Day grew out of the conviction that the arts are for everyone, whatever their cognitive or physical ability, and that there should be no barriers to access.

Kids Euro Festival is made possible by the generous support of Susan Carmel Lehrman, the Sachiko Kuno Foundation, TV5 USA, Dr. Gregory A. and JaLynn Prince/Madison House Autism Foundation, Holiday Inn Georgetown, and *Washington Parent Magazine*, and by the assistance of the European-American Cultural Foundation (E-ACF) in cooperation with the Delegation of the European Union to the United States.

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Websites: www.kidseurofestival.org and www.keengreaterdc.org
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