



**Bright Beginnings' Betty Jo Gaines honored with Pioneer Award
by the Washington Wizards and Amtrak**

WASHINGTON, DC, (March 1, 2012): Bright Beginnings, Inc. congratulates Executive Director Dr. Betty Jo Gaines for being honored with a Pioneer Award by Amtrak and the Washington Wizards for making a positive impact in her community through hard work and dedication. Dr. Gaines was honored along with Coolidge High football coach Natalie Randolph and Neal Henderson, the founder of the Fort Dupont Ice Hockey Club during an award and video presentation during half-time at last night's Wizards game. The Washington Wizards and Amtrak joined forces to recognize African American community leaders in honor of Black History Month.

Nancy Register, the President of the Bright Beginnings Board of Directors, said "I can think of no better way to celebrate Black History Month than to honor Dr. Betty Jo Gaines for the history she is making with homeless children and their families and the many futures she's impacting by acting on her belief that homeless children deserve our very best."

For the past 12 years, Dr. Gaines has ably led and established Bright Beginnings as a nationally-recognized child and family development center for homeless families with young children. Dr. Gaines said, "I accepted this award for all the homeless children and their families in Washington, DC who deserve a good start in life. I'm not standing here by myself but I'm representing the many staff, board members and donors who believe as I do that every homeless child deserves a bright beginning."

Bright Beginnings, which has served more than 2,100 homeless children and their families during the last 20 years, is a nationally-accredited child and family development center for homeless infants, toddlers and preschoolers and their families. Holistic education and therapeutic services positively impact school readiness and prepare homeless children for kindergarten. Bright Beginnings' family-stabilizing services create a more stable environment for homeless children and get their parents back on their feet.

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