



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

---

### **Affinity Express Announces its Participation in Street Source, a Program that Invests in Training and Provides Employment Opportunities to Street Youth**

**Chicago, April 20, 2010**—Affinity Express Inc., Affinity Express Inc., the leading offshore, onshore and onsite provider of high-volume print and online advertising and marketing design solutions, with hundreds of newspaper, yellow pages, direct marketer, retail, corporate and ad agency clients, announced its participation in a pilot of Street Source, an ongoing effort to develop, demonstrate and disseminate strategies that provide youth in poverty a real future by becoming productive citizens. In this effort, Affinity Express will partner with Street Kids International (SKI), Ayala Corporation, Virlanie, Cummins Inc. and the NGO PCI. The one-year pilot project will be located first in India and later in the Philippines. It will demonstrate how the integration of the expertise and resources within multi-national corporations (MNCs) and the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry, and the professional and personal development offered by non-government organizations (NGOs), can create a financially self-sustaining training and employment placement program that can be replicated in other industrial and business centers throughout Asia.

MNCs and BPOs continue to grow despite the economic downturn. With this growth comes an increase in demand for support workers. Street Kids International believes that through private sector partnership building, these economic opportunities can be harnessed for the benefit of unemployed slum youth and the NGOs that serve them. In India, opportunities are extremely limited for the estimated 75 million street youth in India living under \$1 per day, according to the UN World Youth Report 2007.

Many of the programs which address street youth do not focus on their potential as contributing citizens. With support from Affinity Express, SKI, Ayala through Affinity Express, Virlanie, Cummins and PCI, this pilot project will initially assist 25 marginalized youth in accessing stable employment and shelter, enabling them to contribute to society and improve their futures. At the same time, it will lay the groundwork for a sustainable program that will continue to provide employment opportunities for the youth that most need it. The project will also provide a working model for interested MNCs and BPOs located in countries with developing economies.

The program model will be tested during a one-year period. During the demonstration phase employers throughout India and leaders in poverty reduction will be invited to observe and become engaged in the project. Upon completion of an external evaluation, the program model will be revised and a guide for employers produced and distributed. A minimum of 50 companies will be introduced to the project during the pilot phase. The expectation is that at least five new Street Source projects will be developed in India within two years of the project's completion.

The process of relationship building with NGO partners and the private sector started in 2008. A Street Kids International Board Member, Affinity Express Founder & President of Marketing Communications David Grant, who has extensive experience in the BPO sector, has forged relationships to bring NGOs, MNCs and BPOs together to create this opportunity. These relationships have been developed for the express purpose of collaboration in the Street Source Project. Companies have been keenly interested to join the project as a part of their corporate social responsibility strategy and/or as a human resource opportunity. They have all formally agreed to assist in the employment of street youth within their centers or with their affiliates.



As the project manager, Street Kids International will lead the program conceptualization, partner management, delivery of training of trainers programs and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. As the lead organization, Street Kids will have memorandums of understanding with the partner non-government organizations and private sector partners. Membership will include David Grant as chair with representatives from Cummins Inc., Affinity Express, Inc., PCI and Street Kids International.

There will be three distinct components of the Street Source training package curriculum to address street youth's particular needs. The first is job readiness education, which will prepare participants for the world of work and the implications of the commitment. Social competency education will involve the practice and integration of the softer skills related to success in the workplace and independent life. Peer-to-peer training will take place once the first group of youth has passed through the curriculum to employment. It has been proven that training and educating street youth in "hard" skills alone, such as vocational and job readiness training, will not enable them to enter new labor markets. The need to integrate sessions related to youth adaptation to not only formal work life and a new social sphere, but financial independence and new sets of responsibilities go beyond the scope of traditional curricula.

### **About Affinity Express**

Affinity Express is the leading business process outsourcing company that is 100% dedicated to graphic and design services. Headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, Affinity Express has more than 800 employees and maintains production centers in Pune, India and Manila, Philippines. The company is the only multi-shore BPO in the outsourced graphic space, which offers disaster recovery and business continuity planning for clients. Affinity Express delivers services 24 hours per day and seven days per week, producing products in more than 30 software packages and multiple platforms. The company manages its unique creative process with a continuous improvement approach based on Lean Six Sigma, so that clients receive reliable output with fast turn times for their mission-critical digital files. The comprehensive, customized graphics solutions of Affinity Express help clients lower production costs, generate higher profits and gain a competitive edge, without having to invest in establishing and maintaining these capabilities internally.

At the end of 2006, Livelt Investments, Inc., the holding company for Ayala Corporation's investments in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector, acquired 100% of Delaware-incorporated Affinity Express. Founded in 1834, Ayala Corporation is the oldest business house in the Philippines and one of the largest conglomerates in the country. Ayala Corporation and its listed subsidiaries have a combined market capitalization of approximately \$13.5 billion.

For more information about Affinity Express, please visit [www.affinityexpress.com](http://www.affinityexpress.com).

### **About Street Kids International**

Street Kids International is a non-profit agency founded in Canada in 1988 that is a global leader in developing and disseminating the strategies and tools needed to give the most marginalized children around the world the choices, skills, and opportunities to make a better life for themselves. Street Kids teams with youth service organizations to develop locally relevant, innovative participatory education programs using award-winning animations and skill development training that enable youth to start a business or become employed. Street Kids International's success has been recognized by both private sector and government agencies. The United Nations recently identified Street Kids International as a global best practice leader in youth work. In its 21-year history, SKI has worked in more than 60 countries and reached more than three million street active children and youth worldwide. Currently, they are working on a range of multi-year child and youth livelihood projects in Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Nepal, India, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Poland.

Street Kids has been recognized as an expert in effective field level programming on livelihood skills. Numerous organizations including UNICEF's Youth Programming in Nepal, Save the Children USA's



Child Entrepreneurship Project in Egypt, Education Development Centre's (Equip3) IDEJEN project in Haiti, the Open Society Institute in Central Asia, MEDA in Egypt and corporate partner ECCO in Poland and Kenya, have all selected Street Kids International as a go-to leader in alternative economic development and financial literacy for vulnerable youth.

**About Virlanie**

Virlanie Foundation Inc is one of the largest, private, non-sectarian child-caring institutions in Metro Manila, Philippines. It is a non-government organization (NGO) reaching out to street children. It cares for children in need of special protection: abandoned, abused, exploited, neglected, orphaned, poor. Close to 200 staff and volunteers, supported by a network of donors and sponsors, touched the lives of 1,200 street children in 2009. Virlanie will do more in 2010. Founded by French social worker, Dominique Lemay, the non-profit foundation celebrates its 18th anniversary this year and has helped 11,000 children become responsible and self-sufficient adults.

**About Cummins Inc.**

Cummins is a global power leader that designs, manufactures, sells and services diesel engines and related technology around the world. Cummins serves its customers through its network of 500 company-owned and independent distributor facilities and more than 5,200 dealer locations in over 190 countries and territories.

**About PCI**

PCI, as the implementing partner, will screen youth, provide the youth with job readiness education, monitor and adjust the approach, and liaise with BPOs/MNCs in each region throughout the program implementation. Street Kids recognizes the vital role of experienced, skilled staff in delivering quality work and both organizations have met Street Kids criteria in this regard.

# # #

**Contact:**

Kelly Glass  
Affinity Express  
847-930-3205  
[kellyg@affinityexpress.com](mailto:kellyg@affinityexpress.com)