



## For Immediate Release

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# The McKenzie Noelle Wilson Foundation Opens 2<sup>nd</sup> McKenzie's Academic Resource Center To Serve Local Youth

*September 6, 2012 – Jacksonville, FL* – The McKenzie Noelle Wilson Foundation announces the opening of its 2<sup>nd</sup> McKenzie's Academic Resource Center, or MARC, on Thursday, September 13.

**Media is invited to attend the opening ceremony at 5:00 p.m. in the Countryside Village community at 10960 Beach Blvd.** MARC will provide free programs to students, elementary through high school, residing in the community. Those programs include mentoring, tutoring, use of a computer lab, early learning and special teen programs. Open after school every Monday through Thursday, and operated by volunteer teachers and teenagers, the center provides opportunities for students to grow and learn.

The first McKenzie's Academic Resource Center opened in September 2011 and serves over 250 students residing in the Portside community on Beach Blvd., many of whom are considered at-risk learners. "Due to the engaging programs at MARC, we have seen an increase in the active involvement of parents in their children's education. The discipline referrals from Portside students at Chets Creek have decreased by 12% since the opening and retention rates have also decreased, despite the significant increase in population", says Liz Duncan, intervention specialist at Chets Creek Elementary.

At the new MARC, The McKenzie Noelle Wilson Foundation is partnering with Windy Hill Elementary, Twin Lakes Academy Middle School, Englewood High School and Sandalwood High School. Each school has students who reside in the Countryside Village community; therefore, teachers from those schools will volunteer as tutors at MARC. American Residential Communities is also a local business partner and has donated the space for McKenzie's Academic Resource Center.

Involvement from the community is encouraged as volunteers are essential to maintain the after-school programs. Anyone interested in volunteering and "leaving their MARC" as an after-school mentor, can sign up at [www.mckenziegives.org](http://www.mckenziegives.org).