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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CITY PARKS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES ING AS MULTI-YEAR TITLE SPONSOR OF GREEN GIRLS PROGRAM

Three-Year Sponsorship of the Environmental Education Program for Middle School Girls Begins This Spring “CityParks Green Girls Empowered by ING”

April 22, 2020 - New York, NY - In celebration of Earth Day, **City Parks Foundation** and **ING Americas** announce a three-year partnership to support the CityParks Green Girls program. **CityParks Green Girls Empowered by ING** is an innovative science-and STEM-based after school and summer program that inspires early adolescent girls to excel as environmental scientists and see their potential as stewards of New York City’s precious natural resources.

Nearly 20 years ago, in order to increase awareness among young New Yorkers about the important role that green space plays in mitigating environmental impacts, while also addressing the dearth of science programs for girls and evidence of girls’ lagging science scores, City Parks Foundation created Green Girls to excite young women in 6th-8th grade, living in under-resourced neighborhoods, about STEM learning. Today, as New Yorkers shelter at home, their only respite is their neighborhood public park, which remains open and free to use to support their physical, mental, and emotional health. The mission of the Green Girls is more important than ever, teaching the next generation of city dwellers to steward these crucial -- and fundamentally democratic -- public resources.

Through this new ING partnership, City Parks Foundation will double the size of its experiential summer intensive program for young New Yorkers beginning in 2021. It will also adapt the Green Girls curriculum and make it available to teachers around the country, free of charge, beginning in late 2020. The digital curriculum will be offered free for download and will require teachers to participate in an online learning session with City Parks Foundation educators beforehand and to report on their program outcomes to inform and help shape future curriculum updates. The curriculum will include suggested lesson plans, tips on establishing partnerships, and advocacy tools to help instructors run a successful program. The digital curriculum will be made available at cityparksfoundation.org/learn.

The Green Girls transform NYC's public parklands, forests and waterways into learning laboratories, as they engage in hands-on experiments and community service. Students interact with a wide range of primarily female environmentalists and scientists, such as park rangers, foresters, ornithologists, and wildlife experts, to learn about a variety of potential careers in the sciences - an industry where over 75% of the workforce is male. In addition to STEM lessons, the program also facilitates social-emotional learning at this critical time in a young woman's development, through discussions that are often led by former students who have advanced to paid internships; and team-building activities focused on female empowerment, individual voice, and self-awareness, aiming to foster healthy relationship development between students.

"We are thrilled about our new partnership for the Green Girls program," said **Heather Lubov, Executive Director of City Parks Foundation**. "ING takes sustainability very seriously, and has developed a comprehensive corporate policy that demonstrates its long-term commitment to improving climate outcomes. I could not think of a better partner for our girls, offering them a strong example of good corporate citizenship. Thanks to ING, we will be able to empower young women in New York City and across the country."

"This new partnership will create opportunities for Green Girls locally and nationally," said **Chrissy Word, Director of Education at City Parks Foundation**. "This support will help educate young women to become the next generation of environmental changemakers, as well as provide educators nationally with innovative tools that will result in meaningful science lessons in outdoor classrooms as well as advocacy for and restoration of our natural areas by young women."

For more than 15 years, ING has been a major supporter of many of City Parks Foundation's free sports instruction for kids, while hundreds of ING employees have contributed thousands of volunteer hours to beautify neighborhood parks across the city.

"We are very excited to have the opportunity to support the Green Girls program, and build on our existing relationship with the City Parks Foundation," said **Gerald Walker, CEO of ING Americas**. "The New York City park system is a vital part of our community, and using these resources to inspire, educate and empower the leaders of tomorrow - both in New York but for the first time expanded across the U.S. for anyone to access online - is an important step to ensuring future generations can enjoy the same benefits."

Committing to providing enriching opportunities for the Green Girls, ING will not only support the program financially, but will offer mentoring workshops and career development insights for program participants. Through one-on-one sessions with ING's women leaders across the organization, ING aims to show program participants they can turn their passion for science, math, and the environment into a career in the emerging sustainable and green economy.

About City Parks Foundation

At City Parks Foundation, we are dedicated to invigorating and transforming parks into dynamic, vibrant centers of urban life through sports, arts, community building and education programs for all New Yorkers. Our programs -- located in more than 400 parks, recreation centers and public schools across New York City -- reach 310,000 people each year. Our ethos is simple: thriving parks mean thriving communities.

About CityParks Learn

CityParks Learn, our standards-aligned environmental education programs, helps students experience the fun of science, while learning about their relationship to the natural world and the ways in which they can protect our environment. We provide STEM-based environmental science programs for 5,000 elementary, middle, and high school students throughout New York City, through school-day, after school, and summer programming. Also offered are credit-bearing training and paid internships for teenagers as well as teacher training in conducting science lessons using parks as outdoor classrooms.

About ING Americas

ING Americas is the brand name of ING's wholesale business in the Americas region, and a part of ING Group N.V. ("ING"), a global financial services company of Dutch origin with a network spanning 40 countries. ING has more than 54,000 employees offer financial services to customers in over 40 countries. Sustainability forms an integral part of ING's strategy, evidenced by ING's ranking as Leader in the banks industry group by Sustainalytics and 'A' rating in MSCI's ratings universe. ING Group shares are included in major sustainability and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) index products of leading providers STOXX, Morningstar and FTSE Russell. ING Americas offers a full array of wholesale financial products, such as commercial lending, corporate finance and a full range of financial markets, products and services.