

Indy organization wins \$20k to kick off 18th annual local festival

10-day Spirit & Place festival begins with major prize for daring project from Latino Youth Collective

INDIANAPOLIS – The annual Spirit & Place Festival is in full swing following an exciting opening night event and award of \$20,000 to one organization's most daring project on race. Javier Barrera of the Latino Youth Collective was awarded the prize following his presentation of "Race: A Look Inside" during the "\$20k: A Competition About Race" event, alongside three other finalists previously selected by a panel of judges among a pool of 43 applicants.

Barrera's project proposed the Latino Youth Collective's creation of a comprehensive educational kit including a documentary, website and public screenings to capture current notions of race in Central Indiana over the first half of 2014. He was chosen by a combination of votes from the audience and judges.

"The project is designed 100 percent around civic engagement, each of its components intended to allow public participation at many levels," says Barrera. "By touching on topics often ignored, we hope the documentary will spark and ignite deep and thoughtful conversations by challenging viewers to be self-critical. We believe there is no culture of self-improvement without a culture of self-reflection."

Now in its 18th year, the Indianapolis-based Spirit and Place Festival celebrates the theme of "RISK" through November 10 with a series of more than 30 diverse and thought-provoking programs in various venues. Inherent in the human experience, "RISK" will be explored in a broad range of events looking through the lens of culture, faith, history, education, and more. The opening night event continued the festival's inaugural Signature Series, a collection of dynamic programs and events presented year-round that reflect the annual theme.

"Events like this dare us all to be bolder in our work to transcend differences and make a difference," says Spirit & Place Festival Director Pam Blevins-Hinkle. "This is what Spirit & Place is all about – bringing disparate people, ideas, and organizations together in new ways to spark collective action for the common good. This year's theme of 'RISK' provides a fantastic stage to launch a community challenge such as the \$20K event, and the 2014 theme of 'JOURNEY' will offer ample space for continued exploration and discovery around ideas that matter."

A full list of festival events is available at spiritandplace.org. The 2013 Spirit & Place Festival runs through November 10.

About the Spirit & Place Festival

The Spirit & Place Festival catalyzes civic engagement, respect for diversity, public imagination, and enduring change Spirit & Place is a collaborative community

project managed by The Polis Center, part of the Indiana University School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI. Major partners include Lilly Endowment Inc.; Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation, Inc.; The Scott A. Jones Foundation; Bohlsen Group; The Indianapolis Foundation, a CICF Fund; IUPUI; IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI; University of Indianapolis, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis Public Library and more than 200 other community partners and donors. For more information, call The Polis Center at (317) 274-2455 or visit www.spiritandplace.org. The 2013 festival takes place November 1-10.

###

MEDIA CONTACT

Jessica Kiefer & Andrew Hayenga

jkiefer@bohlsengroup.com

ahayenga@bohlsengroup.com

317.602.7137