



## For Immediate Release

### Local business leader selected to speak at Boston event

Little Sprouts Founder and CEP chosen to speak at the Inner City Economic Forum

Lawrence, MA, Monday, July 2, 2007 – Little Sprouts Child Enrichment Centers is pleased to announce that CEO and Little Sprouts Founder, Susan Leger-Ferraro has been selected to be a speaker at the 2007 Inner City Economic Forum on Friday, July 13<sup>th</sup> in Boston. This panel is hosted in conjunction with the Inner City Entrepreneurs. Initiative for a Competitive Inner City Director Manjari Raman commented on Susan's appearance, "She is very motivational. Her inner city business is very inspiring and she speaks well to many issues that inner city entrepreneurs face: control, capital, growth, mission, community impact and expansion to scale." She continued, "Little Sprouts was selected to present to the whole audience because it is seen as one of the best companies participating in the initiative."

#### About Little Sprouts Child Enrichment Centers

Little Sprouts Child Enrichment Centers have been leaders in High Quality Childhood Education since 1982, focusing on involving families in each child's development and education. From the beginning, Little Sprouts has been committed to creating a holistic experience for children, combining a stimulating atmosphere and cutting-edge curriculum with an outstanding range of services. Little Sprouts has received national recognition from the U.S. Department of Education for the quality of their programs, having been named a Preschool Center of Educational Excellence and awarded the prestigious Early Reading First Grant two times, once in September 2003 for \$1.5M and again in September 2006 for \$3.49M. Little Sprouts centers include seven sites in Andover, Methuen, Lowell, Lawrence, Haverhill, Westford and Roxbury. Founder Susan Leger-Ferraro has been recognized as Intriguing Individual of the North Shore by *North Shore Living* in 2005 and received the YWCA's Tribute to Women in 2004. Susan was awarded the 2007 International ATHENA Award for her empowerment of professional women in the Massachusetts workforce. For more information visit [www.littlesprouts.com](http://www.littlesprouts.com)

#### About Inner City Entrepreneurs

Inner City Entrepreneurs (ICE) through practice and applied research promotes job creation, wealth generation, and community building for existing inner-city small businesses and organizations interested in growth. ICE fulfills its mission by partnering with inner city community-based organizations to offer advanced management training, peer-to-peer learning, one-on-one coaching, and networking opportunities to entrepreneurs who want access to new markets, capital, and knowledge to grow their businesses significantly. The graduates then continue to work together as part of the ICE Alumni Network.

Since 2004, ICE has successfully launched three classes working with a total of 41 entrepreneurs in the Boston area. ICE fills a gap in the small business economic development field using an asset based, holistic approach to its programming. ICE's methodology is based on the premise that entrepreneurs will use their own businesses as the case from which they learn. Upon completion of the program, each entrepreneur has set specific milestones, developed a strategic plan to grow his or her business, and worked with peers, experts, and coaches to gain greater access to new sources of capital, markets, and knowledge. Each entrepreneur receives a Certificate in Small Business Entrepreneurship from Boston University's Entrepreneurial Management Institute.

In addition, having emerged from Boston University, a world class research institution, ICE is committed to developing a body of research and case studies on inner city economic development that will inform the academic and economic development communities and influence the public policy debate concerning the

allocation of resources to start-ups versus existing businesses with growth potential. ICE is in the planning stages of replicating the model in Massachusetts as well as in other states around the country.

**For additional information, please contact:**

Amy Luckiewicz, Community Connector  
Little Sprouts Child Enrichment Centers  
(781)588-0257  
aluckie@littlesprouts.com