

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**INSTITUTE OF MUSIC WELCOMES NEW ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR PORCHÉ HARDY; COMES TO ELIZABETH FROM
NJPAC “READY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF
OUR YOUNG PEOPLE”**



(Elizabeth, NJ: September 12, 2014) – Executive Director Alysia Souder and President of the Board Betty Prezzy Bryant are thrilled to announce that Ms. Porché Hardy, previously Associate Director of Arts Training at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, has joined the Institute of Music for Children as Assistant Director. Ms. Hardy will be responsible for the management of a range of on- and off-site programs, including the Afterschool Institute, the Summer Institute, and the Community Institute.

Ms. Souder said “We are so grateful to have such a gifted and experienced arts educator join the Institute. Porché is going to make a huge impact on our staff, our organization, and most importantly our kids.”

Ms. Hardy joins the Institute after an eight-year career at NJPAC, which began when she won the Star-Ledger Scholarship for the Performing Arts. After her scholarship, she began working at NJPAC as an intern in the Arts Education department, and worked as a Program Manager there while attending Rutgers University in New Brunswick. She graduated with a Bachelors degree in Sociology and Economics while commuting from Newark, where she stayed home to help with her younger siblings while her father was on a National Guard tour in Iraq.

She returned to NJPAC after her studies, rising to the role of Associate Director for Arts Training, and serving as Guidance Counselor for recipients of the Star-Ledger Scholarship that began her career.

“I loved my time at NJPAC, and am excited to use what I have learned in a smaller organization that goes to the core of why I am an arts educator – the kids.” The impact of the Institute on its students and families and its vision of H.A.R.M.O.N.Y. – Helping Achieve Responsible Motivated Optimistic Neighborhood Youth - resonated with Ms. Hardy.

“When I came here for the first time, I immediately felt the *Love* in this community.” says Ms. Hardy, “Every day, I am just so happy to be coming home to the Institute.”

She is currently a Fellow with the New York-based Council of Urban Professionals, where she participates in monthly professional development and service opportunities for emerging leaders in the non-profit sector. At the same time, she is pursuing her Masters in Music Education from Montclair State University.

Ms. Hardy is a trained operatic mezzo-soprano, and holds an Artist Diploma in Acting from the William Esper Studio. She used both in appearances off-Broadway and in New Jersey in productions of *Ragtime* and *Rent*. She is excited to get into the classroom with the Institute students as a voice and acting coach, and will take on other teaching roles as well.

Ms. Hardy brings a wealth of technology and management experience to the Institute, and will work closely with Ms. Souder to strengthen and improve systems and procedures throughout the organization. “I can’t wait to get into the details and the data. I love that stuff!”

Originally from North Carolina, Ms. Hardy grew up in Newark and attended Arts High School. She is an avid shopper and a devotee of Suze Orman and the art of personal financial services.

Join Ms. Hardy and the rest of the Institute community in classes this Fall! Registration for new classes is now open and spaces are already filling up. Fall classes start the second week of October and run for 24 weeks. Contact Ms. Hardy or Program Coordinator Ena Gomez at 908.469.1211x6 to schedule a registration appointment.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE OF MUSIC FOR CHILDREN: The Institute of Music for Children develops the personal and communal potential of 550 urban youth annually by offering economically accessible, high-quality arts training in a secure environment. The Institute believes that artistic expression and the creative process prepare children for success, endow them with life skills and self-confidence, and realize our vision of H.A.R.M.O.N.Y - Helping Achieve Responsible Motivated Optimistic Neighborhood Youth.

<http://www.instituteofmusic.org>

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