



**For Immediate Release:
December 4, 2006**

**Contact: Bridget Perry
617-954-2276**

MCCA LAUNCHES NEIGHBORHOOD ART PROGRAM TO PROMOTE LOCAL ART GROUPS
“Greetings From MY Boston” Postcard Designs From Dorchester, Roxbury and Mattapan
Youngsters Kick-Off Program

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) today announced that it will launch at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center and John B. Hynes Convention Center a neighborhood art program showcasing Boston’s local artists to national and international conventioners. Inaugurating the art program is “Greetings From MY Boston,” postcards created by Boston youths depicting the city through their eyes. The postcard exhibit will be on display at the BCEC through 2008.

“The BCEC provides a strong backdrop on which to showcase these local talents, while raising cultural awareness and community support for the arts,” said James E. Rooney, Executive Director of the MCCA. “The MCCA welcomes nearly 600,000 people per year from around the world to its facilities and this program will expose local talents to a broad audience of people that they normally wouldn’t have the opportunity to reach.”

The MCCA’s broader art program was launched with the Summer Street Solstice Exhibit, which has had two successful years at the BCEC, including a juried show in 2006. Neighborhood art programs are encouraged to contact the art program at artprogram@massconvention.com for more information on participating for future exhibits. The commitment to raising cultural awareness and community support is the foundation upon which the art program at the MCCA will flourish. An exhibition schedule and permanent collections process plan for more events are underway.

“Greetings From MY Boston” will feature several neighborhoods at one time for six months, and then new communities will be rotated into the exhibit space. As part of the ongoing public art project called “Greetings From Boston” directed by local architects and artists Gretchen Schneider and Erika Zekos, “Greetings From MY Boston” postcards will depict the day-to-day life experiences and places that shape the lives of the residents but rarely, if ever, are seen in guided tours or glossy postcard images. This project celebrates the diversity of Boston’s unique people and places through a series of innovative designs.

“This project provides the opportunity to celebrate the areas of this great city that are often neglected,” said Citizen Schools Executive Director John Werner. “We are celebrating these neighborhoods and recognizing them from the point of view of our youth - the future of Boston. These photographs truly show the amazing work that kids are capable of when given a forum for creativity.”

Students in Dorchester, Roxbury and Mattapan who attend South Boston's 4th Presbyterian Music & Arts Program and Dorchester's Citizen Schools Eighth Grade Academy are the first local children to be displayed at the BCEC. Disposable cameras were given to the children to create photo essays that depict the spirit of their neighborhoods. The students worked with Schneider, Zekos and Boston photographer Jamara Wakefield to learn how to create strong photographs and through a guided process, they selected the photographs to be printed as postcards. The neighborhood student art programs to be featured in the postcard exhibit includes: United South End Artists, Jamaica Plain Artists, Roslindale Open Studios, South Boston Open Studios, Fort Point Arts Community, Dorchester Open Studios, Hyde Park, Allston Arts District, Fenway Studios, Artists Group of Charlestown.

"Greetings From MY Boston" has been funded by grants from the Boston Foundation for Architecture and the Kahn Institute at Smith College. The "Greetings From My Boston" program will distribute the postcards through Boston public libraries with sales of the postcards supporting the future of the project and the profits used to fund scholarships for youth in architecture and design programs.

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority owns and oversees the operations of the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center, the MassMutual Center in Springfield, MA and the Boston Common Parking Garage. In fiscal year 2006, the MCCA hosted at the BCEC and the Hynes 276 events with 579,370 attendees that generated 513,000 hotel roomnights and \$435 million in economic impact for Greater Boston.

Large upcoming events at the BCEC include the Real Estate Wealth Expo attracting 50,000 attendees this weekend, December 2-3, 2006; Microsoft: Key Cities Road Show 2007 bringing 2,000 attendees on January 24, 2006; and New England Grows drawing 15,500 attendees February 6-8, 2006.

###