

Media Advisory

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**400 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS FROM VILLAGE ELEMENTARY  
(PRINCETON AREA)  
LEARN ABOUT LIFE WITHOUT SIGHT  
FROM  
11 YEAR OLD, BLIND HUMANITARIAN ROCCO FIORENTINO**

**ROCCO TEACHES STUDENTS ABOUT HIS WORLD  
AND SINGS, AS HE IS AN ACCOMPLISHED JAZZ MUSICIAN**

**WHEN:** Friday, June 13, 2008  
8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

**WHERE:** Village Elementary School  
100 Main Blvd  
Skillman, NJ (near Princeton)  
609-466-7606

Susan Lacey, Principal

**WHAT:** 400 4<sup>th</sup> grade students will have their eyes opened when 11 year old, blind humanitarian Rocco Fiorentino shares his positive outlook on life, even though he has no sight. Rocco will also sing jazz standards, demonstrating that being blind does not have to hold you back from pursuing your dreams. (Rocco has performed on “The Today Show” and sings at clubs throughout the country.)

**WHY:** After hearing about Rocco Fiorentino, Village Elementary School invited him to speak representing his family’s foundation named for him, The Little Rock Foundation – that helps children who are blind and visually impaired. Rocco, who was a finalist for the Volvo for Life Award this year and was just named as a Build-A-Bear Huggable Hero (one of 12 in the world), has been honored for his work with NJ State Legislators, persuading them to dedicate \$1.2 million to Braille Education and Services. For more information about Rocco, visit [www.musicbyrocco.com](http://www.musicbyrocco.com). For more information about The Little Rock Foundation, visit [www.tlrf.org](http://www.tlrf.org).

**ABOUT ROCCO:**

An honor student at Signal Hill Elementary School in Voorhees, NJ, Rocco is truly a miracle child. Not only because he had less than a 5% chance of survival, but because he brings joy into the world through his incredible musical talent. Born four months premature and weighing only 1 ½ pounds, Rocco was left with no sight, but his vision is very clear. To him, the world is always sunny. He has a perpetual smile, especially when he plays piano, composes jazz compositions, sings one of his favorite jazz standards, or plays his drums or saxophone. He is an inspirational speaker, visiting schools and seniors groups as an Ambassador for The Little Rock Foundation.

## **ABOUT THE LITTLE ROCK FOUNDATION:**

The Little Rock Foundation was launched in 1998 by Tina and Rocco Fiorentino, after coming home from the hospital with Rocco, their blind baby boy. With nowhere to turn for resources, they decided to support other families that might be in the same situation. The Little Rock Foundation reaches thousands of children and families through its website and its extensive outreach programs that include the following:

- Opened and operated two Family Resource Centers established in Philadelphia. One is at Wills Eye Hospital and the other at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, where resources for deaf and hearing-impaired are also available.
- Run Camp Little Rock, a model for the state of NJ, and the only camp for blind and visually impaired children in the tri-state area.
- Provided thousands of dollars for The Little Rock Foundation Scholarship program
- Successfully lobbied in government – where little Rocco spoke to legislators at age 5 and 8 and convinced them to dedicate \$1.2 million for Braille services and education.
- Provided outreach programs for these children including the annual holiday party.
- Plans to build a log cabin for their camp to offer more programs throughout the year and expand the camping program from one week to eventually eight weeks. They also hope to create more hospital Family Resource Centers to support more families in need and more.

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