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Saint Paul Named One of the Nation's *100 Best Communities for Young People* by America's Promise Alliance

Competition Showcases Successful Efforts by U.S. Cities and Towns to Help Young People Succeed

Saint Paul, Minn. (January 24, 2008) — America's Promise Alliance, the nation's largest alliance dedicated to children and youth, in partnership with Capital One, today announced that St. Paul has been named a winner of its 2008 *100 Best Communities for Young People* competition. The *100 Best* competition recognizes the 100 outstanding communities across America—large and small, rural and urban—that are the best places for young people to live and grow up. More than 300 communities in all 50 states applied for the honor this year. The 100 winning communities span 37 states.

St. Paul was recognized as one of the *100 Best* communities because of the city's strong community-wide youth collaborations, such as the *Second Shift Commission*, the *After School Initiative Collaborative*, and the *Early Childhood Initiative*. The *Second Shift Commission* uses safe locations to provide kids a positive place to be after school. The *After School Initiative* consists of more than 20 local agencies working together to help young people develop and strengthen their academic skills, allowing different groups to work together to serve St. Paul youth as well as raise awareness about issues such as quality indicators for programs and available funding streams for agencies. The *Early Childhood Initiative* brings together private and public resources to help parents of toddlers in low-income neighborhood access high-quality childcare and pre-school programs, giving an early learning boost to children early in their formative years.

"The prosperity of every community and this country depends on how well we care for our children and youth," said Marguerite W. Kondracke, president and CEO, America's Promise Alliance, "Although no place is perfect, when we have communities that make young people a priority and are working to make sure they stay in school and have all the resources necessary to lead healthy, productive lives, we must recognize them and by extension inspire other cities and towns to follow their lead."

"At Capital One, we are committed to building stronger communities, one neighborhood at a time," said Carolyn Berkowitz, Vice President of Community Affairs for Capital One. "That's why we're proud to partner with the Alliance on the *100 Best* competition to recognize the tremendous work in communities across the country to create environments where children and families have boundless opportunities as well as the support systems necessary to champion their growth and encourage their success."

The *100 Best* competition was first held in 2005. This year's winners were selected by a distinguished panel that included some of the nation's most well-known civic, business and nonprofit leaders such as: Gayle Manchin, first lady of West Virginia, United Way President Brian Gallagher, former Mayor of

Denver and President of Webb Group International, Wellington Webb, Thomas Donohue, president and CEO, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Carol Coletta, president and CEO, CEOs for Cities, Christine James-Brown, president and CEO, the Child Welfare League of America, and Dr. Suzanne Morse, executive director of the Pew Partnership for Civic Change.

“Education is a key component to bridging the gap between the haves and have nots,” said Mayor Chris Coleman. “However, education does not start and stop at the doors to schools. As a community, it is in our interest to leverage community and city resources to develop high-quality, child-focused programs so that all families have access to a path of success from cradle to college. We’re proud to be recognized for the work and partnerships that are creating those paths for Saint Paul’s children.”

All communities that completed entries in the *100 Best* competition were required to submit detailed information to the Alliance on existing community programs and initiatives that help deliver the Five Promises—resources identified by America’s Promise as being critical to the development of healthy, successful children: caring adults; safe places; healthy start; effective education; and opportunities to help others; to their young people. Applicants were also asked to describe how different sectors of their community come together to deliver the Five Promises and specific efforts and programs developed to ensure that their young people graduate from high school prepared for college and/or the workforce. Each of these communities, regardless of whether they were selected as a winner, will be eligible to apply for \$300,000 in grants from the Alliance next month.

For more details about the *100 Best* competition and to see a complete list of the 2008 winners, please visit www.americaspromise.org.

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About the America’s Promise Alliance

America’s Promise Alliance is the nation’s leader in forging a strong and effective partnership alliance comprised of corporations, nonprofit organizations, foundations, policymakers, advocacy and faith groups committed to ensuring that children receive the fundamental resources - the Five Promises - they need to lead successful, healthy and productive lives and build a stronger society. Building on the legacy of our founder General Colin Powell, the Alliance believes the success of our children is grounded in experiencing the Five Promises - caring adults; safe place; a healthy start; an effective education; and opportunities to help others - at home, in school and in the community. For more information on America’s Promise Alliance visit: www.americaspromise.org.

About Capital One

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