



Bristol Youth Services

Bristol Virginia Named One of Nation's *100 Best Communities for Young People*

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BRISTOL, Va. – The City of Bristol Virginia is a 2008 winner of the *100 Best Communities for Young People* award from America's Promise, the nation's largest alliance dedicated to children and youth, in partnership with Capital One. The winners were announced Thursday morning on NBC's *Today* show and will be honored at an awards reception in Washington, D.C., later today.

In 2005, America's Promise Alliance initiated an annual award for the 100 outstanding communities across the United States that demonstrate excellence in providing the best environment for young people to live and grow up. Bristol was one of six cities in Virginia – and 100 nationwide – selected out of more than 300 applicants. This year's 100 winners span 37 states.

Bristol Virginia's wide-ranging programs for young people and families gained the attention of the panel of judges who noted that more than half the students in the community participate in after-school programs, with 18 percent involved at least five times per week. Additionally, Bristol Youth Services and the school system have collaborated for five years in LifeSkills, a research-validated substance abuse prevention program that has been successful in reducing the risks of alcohol, tobacco, drug abuse and violence among students. Another winning factor was Bristol's Family Resource Center and Strengthening Families Parenting Program, which brings adults and children together for support and education in parenting issues and struggles.

"It's an honor to be recognized as a community that provides ongoing support for young people," says Jo Hutton, director of Bristol (Va.) Youth Services. "We are proud of our excellent programs for children from birth through college age, and this award emphasizes our city's priorities. I believe that the stronger the sense of pride our young citizens have for where they live, the greater the positive effect on the overall health and well-being of our community."

Applicants for the *100 Best Communities for Young People* award submitted detailed information on existing community programs and initiatives that help deliver to youth the Five Promises – resources identified by America's Promise as being critical for success in life: caring adults, safe places, a healthy start, effective education and opportunities to help others. Applications also included a description of ways different sectors of the community work together to deliver these promises, as well as specific efforts developed to ensure that young people who graduate from

high school are prepared for college and/or the workforce. All entrants are eligible to apply for \$300,000 in grants from the Alliance.

Written testimonials from two Virginia High School students and a Virginia Intermont College student, all of whom have benefited from Bristol Youth Services, played an important role in Bristol's application process, according to Hutton.

Bristol, Tenn., the other half of the "Twin Cities," was a winner of the *100 Best Communities for Young People* in 2007.

"We're pleased that Bristol Virginia joins Bristol Tennessee as a partner in education and youth," says Margaret Feierabend, Bristol Tennessee city council member and the city's Bristol Promise leader. "Our community has seen the benefits, both directly and indirectly, of being recognized as a leader in services for our young people. We look forward to continued cooperation in these efforts."

About America's Promise Alliance

America's Promise is the nation's leader in forging a strong, effective partnership alliance comprised of corporations, non-profit organizations, foundations, policymakers, advocacy and faith groups committed to ensuring that children receive the fundamental resources they need to lead successful, health and productive lives and build a stronger society. Building on the legacy of founder General Colin Powell, the Alliance believes the success of children is grounded in experiencing the Five Promises (caring adults, safe places, a healthy start, 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

Headquartered in McLean, Va., Capital One Financial Corporation (www.capitalone.com) is a financial holding company with 732 locations in five states – N.Y., N.J., Conn., Texas and La. Its principal subsidiaries, Capital One Bank, Capital One Auto Finance, Inc. and Capital One, N.A., offer a broad spectrum of financial products and services to consumers, small businesses and commercial clients.

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