



CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

A Voice for Washington's Children, Youth & Families

For Immediate Release

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2007 Voices for Children Award Winners Announced

SEATTLE (April 11, 2007)—At its annual luncheon, the Children's Alliance will present five awards honoring child advocates whose work has improved the lives of countless Washington children. This diverse group of activists have devoted hundreds of hours to speaking up for children, youth and families.

The Voices for Children Awards were established by the Children's Alliance to recognize those who have dedicated extraordinary amounts of time and energy to making Washington a better place for kids. Awardees are those who have dedicated volunteer hours or gone above and beyond mere job descriptions to ensure that laws, policies and programs serve children.

The awards will be presented at the **Children's Alliance's Voices for Children Awards Luncheon**, June 7 at 11 a.m., at Qwest Field in downtown Seattle. The keynote will be offered by **Governor Chris Gregoire**, who has placed the needs of children first in this year's legislative session. The event is open to the public (see reservation details below).

The following awardees will be honored:

- **Michael Ramos**, Director of Social Justice Ministries for the Church Council of Greater Seattle, will be honored for his work to protect the civil and human rights of immigrants and refugees in Washington State. Mr. Ramos' leadership includes serving as the chair of United for a Healthy Washington. This community coalition formed to oppose Initiative 946 that would have restricted access to basic health and human services for children and adults who are not U.S. citizens.
- **Laurie Lippold**, Public Policy Director at the Children's Home Society of Washington, will be recognized for her dedication for the past 17 years as a lobbyist for children in Olympia—most especially children in the foster care system. Her efforts have helped ensure the passage of countless laws improving the lives of children in Washington state since 1990.
- **Dr. John Neff, M.D.**, of Children's Hospital & Regional Medical Center will be honored for his extensive work as Chair of the Health Coalition for Children & Youth—the driving

force behind a decade-long effort to secure health care coverage for all children. The coalition's efforts on this issue culminated in this year's passage of the children's health bill, which provides affordable, comprehensive health coverage options to all children in Washington State. For the past 25 years, Dr. Neff has worked to improve the health of thousands of children.

- **Doreen Cato**, Executive Director of First Place in Seattle, has worked for decades with disadvantaged youth—with a special focus on homeless children. Ms. Cato brings about 50 children and adults to Olympia every year for the Children's Alliance's annual advocacy day, Have a Heart for Kids Day, where they meet legislators and speak to the issues that most concern them, including health and housing.
- **Sheriff Bill Mahoney of Cowlitz County** will be recognized for his work with the Fight Crime, Invest in Kids organization as they advocate for increased funding for early learning and child abuse prevention programs. This year in Olympia, he testified before lawmakers on the importance of early childhood development and the impact of early interventions on the course of a child's future.

To attend the Voices for Children Awards Luncheon, please contact: Deborah Bowler at deborah@childrensalliance.org or register online at <http://www.childrensalliance.org/whatsnew/2007luncheon.cfm> Individual tickets are \$60.

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The Children's Alliance is a statewide public policy advocacy organization that works at the local, state and federal level to ensure that all children have the things they need to thrive. Current campaigns focus on health care, anti-hunger and nutrition, foster care, and early learning. Our membership includes 128 organizations and more than 7,500 individuals statewide. To learn more about the Children's Alliance, go to www.childrensalliance.org