

The Story of America's Promise

AMERICA'S PROMISE
ALLIANCE



The Story of America's Promise Alliance

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It Started With a Promise

***“We have no choice. We have no choice but to do this. We have no choice but to go forward. If we’re going to keep this nation marching in the direction that the men who met here over two hundred and twenty years ago wanted us to march, if we’re going to achieve this dream that we believe in for every American regardless of race, color, creed, background or any other distinction, the only thing that really counts is they’re all Americans, they are all our children, they’re all God’s children and we’re going to save each and every one of them one child at a time, God willing and with your help.*”**

Now let’s go out and get it done.”

~Gen. Colin L. Powell (USA) Ret. Philadelphia, April 28, 1997

Looking Back: Our 10th Anniversary

In an historic and unprecedented assembly in Philadelphia, Presidents Clinton, Bush, Carter and Ford, with Mrs. Nancy Reagan representing President Reagan, declared: *“We owe a debt of service to fulfill the God-given promise of America, and our children.”*

America’s Promise – The Alliance for Youth was born at that assembly and has grown and evolved over the years from a clarion call to action, into a set of ideas and common purposes, and now into a national movement of Americans demonstrating that commitment every day.

Under the founding leadership of Gen. Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret), and the continuing leadership of Alma J. Powell, this Alliance established its roots using a simple guiding principle: that all children and youth deserve—and all Americans have a role to play in providing—the fundamental resources needed to grow up to be healthy, independent and responsible adults. We call these resources the Five Promises. They are quite simply the building blocks of success.

In the decade that has passed since that historic call to action, the America's Promise Alliance has grown into the largest cross-sector alliance for children and youth, thanks to the work of dedicated partners—and citizens from all walks of life—who have responded in resounding numbers. Since the Summit:

- 4 million more children have health insurance
- 1.2 million young people have the inspiration and opportunity to volunteer at least 100 hours a year

This is the legacy of the first 10 years of the passion and commitment of the partners who make up the America's Promise Alliance.

There is increased public awareness and consensus about the fundamental value of the Five Promises as a framework that improves children's lives.

Buttressed by empirical research and the practical experience of hundreds of partners and Communities of Promise, there is increased confidence that we know what works. Children and youth with these resources in their lives do better in school, at work, and in life. The cumulative effect of all Five Promises is transformative. They change the trajectory of a child or young person's life. As Peter Benson of the Search Institute notes: *"... Those young people who are nutrient-rich, promise-rich, are five to 10 times more likely to succeed in life, to succeed as students, to succeed as givers, to succeed as contributors and to, ultimately, succeed as citizens, parents and employees."*

There is a widespread acknowledgement that the scope of the challenges facing our youth today and the need to fulfill the Five Promises in their lives now requires a higher level of coordinated, collective action. Their needs and their potential are too great for any one organization.

With urgency and optimism, the Alliance is poised to achieve its original Promise: to fulfill the promise of America for all our children and youth.

There is so much more to do

Despite the nation's prosperity and the generosity of Americans everywhere, the promise of America is not within reach for millions of our young people. With the 2006 report *Every Child, Every Promise*, we can put a number on it:

- More than two-thirds of the 6- to 17-year-olds in our country (34 million) are receiving too few of these Promises to benefit from their full effects.
- Approximately 10 million children are receiving none or only one Promise.
- African-American and Hispanic children and youth are about one-third as likely to have enough of the Promises as Caucasian children and youth.

We all believe that **every child needs and deserves every Promise.**

Looking ahead

The America's Promise Alliance has been about the work of putting many critical pieces in place during its 10-year history.

- The Alliance has developed a compelling theory of change rooted in the belief that traditionally underserved youth with access to all Five Promises are significantly more likely to experience success in life, and that their actual prospects for that success can be measured by improvements over time in 10 basic and predictable child welfare outcome indicators.
- The Alliance has worked with nationally renowned experts to ensure that this theory of change can be benchmarked and then measured for statistically significant gains over time through its *Every Child, Every Promise* reporting process.
- The Alliance has launched a bipartisan advocacy organization called First Focus that is committed to making children and their families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions. Children's health, education and family economics are the three core issues areas around which First Focus is working to promote bipartisan policy solutions.
- The Alliance provides incentives for communities working to fulfill the Five Promises for more youth through its *100 Best Communities for Young People* initiative, which drives collaboration and public awareness. Regional and national forums also provide an ideal setting to share best practices and innovative tools for mobilizing proven strategies to get the most Promises into the lives of the most children in the country.

Our mission is clear: to **mobilize all sectors and every purposeful community across America to ensure that every child has every one of the Five Promises.**

Our role, as established by the Alliance, is to **act as a catalyst for action, provide leadership, ensure focus, track progress and measure results.**

The next step in our commitment to all children and young people having all Five Promises in their lives is setting the goal to **add at least one additional 'Promise' to the lives of 15 million of our most vulnerable young people over the next five years.**

Reaching this goal would **change the lives of roughly half of the most disadvantaged children in this country.**

When we reach this goal, we believe that we will see measurable change in 'bellwether' outcomes for children, especially the **high school completion rate.**

The celebration of the 10th anniversary milestone, and the commitments of the partners who have brought the promise of America to millions of children, began in New York City in June 2007 with those who launched this movement, including former Presidents Bill Clinton and George H.W. Bush.

The Alliance is already looking to the future leadership of this nation to ensure that the clarion call is carried forth by the next president. All announced presidential candidates have been invited to offer their testimony to the power of the Five Promises in their growing up and to set forth their vision of how they would further them in their administrations.

“We have no choice but to keep moving in this direction, to keep giving of our resources, our time, our talent and our energy—because the need is still there. The need is still great. There are still youngsters who are looking to us for a Promise.”

-- Colin L. Powell, Founding Chairman, America's Promise Alliance

THE PRESIDENTS' SUMMIT FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE

What became a historic national gathering that attracted presidents and citizens from communities across the country began as a simple idea from a man who was accustomed to undertaking big challenges. George Romney's distinguished career included positions in the highest levels of leadership as chairman of American Motors Corporation, a three-term governor of Michigan, presidential candidate, secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and founder of the Volunteer Center Network. In the mid-1990s, he was troubled by the direction the country was headed.

High on his list of critical problems was the state of our country's children and youth. This is what Romney wrote:

"No longer can young people turn with confidence to stable families, churches or neighborhood organizations for the support they require, in too many cases. Nor can the schools carry this double burden. Their very ability to educate increasingly is overwhelmed by the lack of parental guidance, and the problems of substance abuse, neglect, malnutrition, substandard housing, and poverty the children bring into the classroom. Under such circumstances there's no way they can develop the skills that creative thinkers require in our increasingly technological world."

He offered his case for what needed to be done:

"If we were threatened by external forces, our resurgence would be swift and sure, centered around a full-scale mobilization of the entire nation. Our domestic problems demand no less of a response than that same kind: a full-scale mobilization of all our creative resources from the largest corporation to the smallest neighborhood group. There are roles in this for government, business, education, religion, professionals, civic organizations, youth, and for each and every American."

Specifically, Romney was deeply concerned about the state of the nation if the shortfalls in investments in America's youth were allowed to continue. Moreover, he foresaw great challenges for future generations and for the future of America as a nation if that trend was not reversed.

Such a drastic change in course could not be created by only a few individuals. As Romney explained in 1995, it would take a strong coordinated effort to influence our national direction:

"We must curb and reverse the vitally serious social problems and connect torn communities or they will render us noncompetitive globally and terminate

us as a great nation. This will require cooperation and support of top leadership from all four sectors, nationally and locally.”

It takes big thinking to effect big change, and George Romney was the man for the job. He envisioned a gathering convened by presidential invitation that would shift our national consciousness in such a pronounced manner—a gathering he called the Leadership Summit for National Service and Volunteering. And just as a shift in national thought could not be achieved by a few individuals alone, such was the case for the planning of the actual Summit.

A Meeting of the Minds

Sadly, Romney would not live to see the Summit come to fruition. His death on July 26, 1995, at age 88, came just five days after he committed his Summit plan to paper, but not before sharing his idea with two kindred spirits, Harris Wofford and Bob Goodwin.

All three already had experience with bringing a nationwide project to life. Prior to the Summit, Romney’s passion was creating the Volunteer Center National Network, a resource for spurring community change through citizen volunteering. The network later merged with the Points of Light Foundation under the leadership of CEO Bob Goodwin.

It has been said of Harris Wofford that one of his north stars is service, so when he met with Romney to discuss the Summit idea, the stars truly aligned. Wofford had just been appointed to the top leadership post at the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) by President Bill Clinton—a job that represented a logical progression in his lifelong career focused on civil rights and citizen service. The man who helped to launch the Peace Corps and AmeriCorps and provided counsel to President John F. Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., had a uniquely rich perspective to bring to Romney’s plan for a large-scale national convening.

Under the capable leadership of Wofford and Goodwin, the Summit moved closer to becoming a reality. Wofford wrote of Romney’s vision:

“In recent years George had come to see that full-time national service in AmeriCorps (or other full-time service programs) and traditional part-time, unpaid volunteering as the twin engines that –working together—could realize the powerful potential of citizens’ action to solve some of our most pressing problems in education, public safety, health and the environment.”

With CNCS and the Points of Light Foundation behind the Summit concept, it became clear that someone was needed to lead the design and the day-to-day planning and implementation in the months leading up to the big event. That person was Gregg Petersmeyer, who had served on President George H. W.

Bush's senior White House staff and as Director of the White House Office of National Service and had known George Romney well.

With a planning chairman on board and a fiscal agent (Points of Light Foundation) in place, it was necessary to secure a location. But as the cadre of advisors and organizers grew, one common thought remained consistent: in order for the Summit to be a success, the event needed a spirit of national unity and independence—and a setting that would elevate it above a typical national gathering and celebrate its historic circumstances. A quick glance through history pointed to the logical spot: Philadelphia.

Every Army Needs a General

"I knew the Summit needed a national figure of extraordinary stature as its chair to help make it a success and that person was Colin Powell," Petersmeyer recalls. Petersmeyer and Powell had crossed professional paths years prior when Powell was a White House Fellow and Petersmeyer was serving as a White House intern. More recently, they served together in the George H.W. Bush administration.

Powell had been absent from public service, but not from the public eye, since serving as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton, when Petersmeyer met with him about plans for the Summit.

Powell agreed to the leadership request on the conditions that the Summit's focus be geared toward improving the lives of America's children and youth and, particularly, that the event be the beginning of a sustainable effort to help achieve that goal.

Improving opportunities for young people is an issue close to Powell's heart, as he acknowledges that the opportunities he received in his childhood put him on the path toward a successful adulthood. In a 2006 interview with *AARP The Magazine*, he explained his experiences growing up in a close-knit community in the South Bronx,

"I was blessed with a family that kept me in play. They wouldn't let me fall by the wayside even though I would have done it in a heartbeat if I did not have them. I sometimes use the metaphor of the pinball machine. You know, you shoot this ball out and out comes this kid, and the kid goes bouncing around the pinball machine, hitting the bumpers and heading into the holes that take you nowhere, and just about the time you're about to slide off into nowhere, the flippers kick you back into play. That's your parents; it's your family, your cousins, your peers, your teachers, your coaches, your ministers, your rabbis. Kids need adults to keep them in play while they're figuring out where they want to go."

The Power of an Apostrophe

As the Summit continued to take shape, the power of George Romney's original idea that an event of this magnitude could only occur under a call to action from all of America's living presidents became even clearer. According to Romney's planning outline, it was the role of the presidents and first ladies to "bring a collective moral authority to the call for a 'new citizenship.'"

Ray Chambers, one of the principal architects of the Summit and America's Promise, and Harris Wofford describe it as 'the power of an apostrophe.' It would include all of the living presidents—not any one president. It would be the Presidents' Summit.

Ensuring that the Summit transcended politics was critical, and a unified call from all living Presidents meant that it would do so. That was a key component of George Romney's original concept and one that was embraced. That national call and tone of unity were front and center when plans for the Summit were unveiled by President Bill Clinton and his predecessor, President George H.W. Bush, at a special White House event on January 24, 1997.

As co-chairs of the Summit, Presidents Clinton and Bush established that the event would be historic in both its purpose and its mood. In his remarks announcing the Summit, Clinton said, "*Citizen service belongs to no party, no ideology. It is an American idea which every American should embrace. Today I am pleased to announce that we are taking an important step to give more Americans the opportunity to fulfill that promise.*"

Bush echoed that sentiment when he said, "*I hope that our joining together, the fact that our predecessors and their spouses—previous Presidents have also indicated support for this summit—sends a simple and a strong message. And that is that when it comes to addressing many of the problems we face as a nation, it isn't a question of partisan politics, of one side against another, it's a question of all pulling together for the common good.*"

In his new role as general chairman of the Summit, Powell reiterated a key point: the Summit was a beginning, not a singular event. "*This is something we're going to be building on in the years ahead, so that when the turn of the century comes, the things we're talking about here today will have taken on concrete forms and we're going to see positive results from our efforts.*"

If You Build It, They Will Come

In the end, the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in Philadelphia signified more than simply the beginning of a campaign for America's youth; it sparked a new era of citizenship. It provided a clarion call to all Americans to take responsibility and action within their organizations and communities to achieve the common purpose of giving all young people the resources they need to be successful in life. It reminded all of us that the American Dream is alive and accessible to every American and that the goal of sharing in that dream should be the birthright of every child.

Leaders from all sectors came and took home with them the framework of the Five Promises. The 3,000 delegates at the Summit included 30 governors, 100 mayors, 145 community delegations, and prominent business leaders. All 50 states were represented.

The Five Promises, immortalized in the Presidents' Summit Declaration, were built upon the wisdom of Bill Milliken, the founder of Communities In Schools, the applied research of Peter Benson of the Search Institute and a growing field of advocates and experts in positive youth development.

Rather than create a new or competing framework for youth development, Milliken offered his organization's Four Principles as a basis for the Five Promises. Marion Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund recommended the addition of healthcare as a critical resource, prompting the addition of "a Healthy Start" as the fifth Promise.

Karen Pittman of the Forum for Youth Investment distilled a community delegation and mobilization strategy. Bill Shore, of Share our Strength, led the commitments team to generate resources of all kinds for the effort. And we were on our way.

THE FIRST 10 YEARS

General Powell's remarks to the Philadelphia delegates summed up the mission of America's Promise quite simply:

"There is a spirit of Philadelphia that will leave Philadelphia tomorrow afternoon and spread across this whole nation—30 governors will go back and spread it; over 100 mayors will go back and spread it, and hundreds of others, leaders around this country who are watching will go back and spread it. Corporate America will spread it, nonprofits will spread it. And each and every one of us will spread it because it has to be done, we have no choice. We cannot leave these children behind if we are going to meet the dreams of our founding fathers."

The Little Red Wagon

In Philadelphia, Powell also unveiled the symbol of America's Promise: the little red wagon, a familiar symbol of childhood. That is why the America's Promise Alliance chose to represent its mission with this simple yet powerful image.

A wagon carries children's dreams and shares in their adventures. A wagon supports a child and has a long handle for all of us to help pull. A wagon can carry provisions for the future. And a wagon presents many ways for children to help one another along the way.

In the beginning, we promised to pull our young people along, support them and nurture them. Soon, they will be able to support themselves, proudly and independently. Then, they will support others.

The little red wagon is a promise and a challenge. We are caring adults; we will give youth the tools they need. They are eager to help, and we must engage their full potential. And then, we promise, they will achieve their dreams.

Alliance Accomplishments

From **1997 to 1999**, the central focus and day-to-day work of America's Promise was to sound the call to action issued at the Presidents' Summit:

"As Americans and as Presidents, we ask every caring citizen to pledge individual commitments of citizen service, voluntary action, the efforts of their organizations, or commitments to individual children in need. By doing so, this nation pledges the fulfillment of America's Promise for every American child."

-- From the Presidents' Summit Declaration

Americans began to answer that call, fueled in part by the catalytic effects of the Presidents' Summit and by the dedicated leadership of General Colin Powell. Governors brought the mission and message of the Summit back home, leading state-wide Promise efforts that generated hundreds of local commitments and thousands of volunteers. Corporate leaders undertook or expanded their company's existing volunteer and philanthropic initiatives and served as champions for the young people in their communities.

Elected officials across the policy spectrum and from government agencies at all levels embraced the youth development principles chartered at the Summit. Communities by the hundreds organized local collaborations around these principles and began the work in earnest to fulfill the promise of America for children where they live, learn, play and worship.

America's Promise had been conceived as a three-year campaign. But clearly, the momentum was building and the work had only just begun. We pledged to keep at it until we fulfilled our presidential and national charter of helping to fulfill the promise of America for all our children and youth.

In **2000**, as America's Promise – The Alliance for Youth broadened, its focus turned to improving the quality of those commitments and strengthening the capacity of the growing base of Communities of Promise.

The Alliance began to offer innovative tools (*The Five Promises Checklist*, co-sponsored with the National Collaboration for Youth) and expanded web-based technical assistance to communities (*Promise Stations* made possible by the Ford Motor Company Fund).

AmeriCorps Promise Fellows were funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service and hundreds of corps members were deployed to assist in organizing community efforts to fulfill the Five Promises. They were selected and administered through the state national service commissions and nonprofit organizations committed to advancing the goals set at the Philadelphia Summit.

By **2003**, the Alliance had generated more than:

- 500 state and local summits
- 400 Communities of Promise
- 20 States of Promise
- Thousands of “Sites of Promise” nationwide, including
 - 2,500 banks
 - 3,000 restaurants (representing all 50 states)
 - More than 6,000 pharmacies
- 400 national partners from the private, public and independent sectors

2003 – 2005

America’s Promise is, at its most elemental and powerful, an idea. In the spring of 2003, then Co-chair Alma Powell released two children’s books—*America’s Promise*, an illustrated storybook, and *My Little Wagon*, a board book for toddlers—in English and Spanish to help promote the message of the Five Promises to children and their families. She described her inspiration behind the books to HarperCollins:

"I wrote these books not only to entertain children, but also to get across a message that I deeply believe in. Both of these books embody the vision of an organization that my husband, Colin Powell, helped found, called America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth.

"I currently serve as the Co-chairman of America's Promise. In this role I often work with children and, unfortunately, I have seen first-hand the dilemma that all too many of them face. Too often today's young people are told that they cannot obtain the obtainable, or achieve the achievable. Yet at America's Promise we believe that a young person—any young person—can obtain or achieve any goal they desire, provided they have a caring, supportive community that is willing to help them gain access to the fundamental resources.

"Every child needs a caring adult role model in his or her life; a safe place to learn and grow; a healthy start; an opportunity to learn marketable skills through education and a chance to give back through community service. Not only are these the fundamental resources that create opportunities for success, they are the Five Promises that America's Promise strives to fulfill for every child. In writing these books, I have tried to stress the importance that these Five Promises play in a young person's life."

America’s Promise is also more than an idea or even an organization—it is an Alliance. Its strengths and impacts come from the collective will and action of its partners. And its authority comes from the power of the Five Promises.

2005-2007

Under the leadership of Chair Alma Powell and President and CEO Marguerite Kondracke, America's Promise underwent a rigorous internal and external review. What has been our impact? How do we add the maximum value to the millions of children and youth who need allies and to the organizations who serve them?

With the help of The Bridgespan Group, nearly 100 past and current partners, national organizations and local coalitions weighed in on the value of the Five Promises, the potential of the Alliance and what role America's Promise would play in the future.

There was near consensus:

- The Five Promises are a powerful framework for transforming children's lives;
- The role of America's Promise is to carry out national awareness, advocacy, and action strategies and work intensively with Alliance partners, both at the national level and in selected demonstration communities; and
- Working through our Alliance partners, we act as a catalyst for action; we provide leadership, ensure focus, track progress, and measure results.

A new five-year plan was adopted and a new governance structure put in place to ensure that the enterprise is 'Alliance-driven'.

We set a numeric goal: **to improve the lives of 15 million of our most disadvantaged children in the next five years through the power of the Five Promises.**

We are tracking Alliance progress on our five-year plan through a 'dashboard' of short-term "process" metrics and long-term outcome indicators including 10 'bellwether' indicators of youth well being, with increasing school graduation rates being the number one indicator of success, followed closely by increasing the enrollment especially for disadvantaged youth in college or meaningful post-secondary training.

We developed and released a new national survey and research report, ***Every Child, Every Promise***, to measure the presence of the Promises in children's lives and to provide a means of marking progress over the years. **In 2006**, the Alliance was able to put a number on just how far we as a nation needed to go to fulfill the Five Promises: two-thirds of our young people are not equipped to succeed. One in five is headed for failure.

To build national and community awareness and advocacy activities, the Alliance launched its annual competition to name the **100 Best Communities for Young People**, followed by the Regional “Best Practice” Forums to bring tools to more communities across the country.

In **2006**, we launched our new bipartisan policy affiliate, **First Focus**, whose priority policy areas are health, education, and family economics.

In **2007**, more than 90 leaders from all sectors gathered in Washington, D.C., to identify how the Alliance, together, will mobilize resources for America's children, particularly those who have the fewest resources available to them. It was a first step in taking collective action to change the lives of 15 million young people in the next five years through the power of the Five Promises.

As we close our first decade, we do so with a renewed sense of urgency and optimism for our mission. We have established a goal to reach 15 million of our most disadvantaged youth with the power of the Five Promise in the next five years. When we do so, we expect to see an improvement in the key indicators of child well being, first and foremost more young people graduating from high school fully prepared for the world of work, civic engagement, and lifelong learning. We expect to see the promise of America fulfilled for millions more children and youth.

“The reason I got involved with America’s Promise, and the reason I think it’s so important, is that the schools by themselves are not going to get the work done that we need done. We need to bring in the community resources. We need to look at all five of those Promises.... My kids have many, many issues that go well beyond instructional issues, and we need to bring in the supports for those kids. If we don’t get out of our silos, if we don’t start thinking in a holistic, integrated way about these kids, we won’t get the work done.”

-- Joel Klein, Chancellor, New York City Public Schools

HEROES AND CHAMPIONS

As we mark our 10th anniversary, it is fitting to honor the heroes who have given powerful form to the founding vision and spirit of our Alliance. They have helped make the promise of America a reality for significant numbers of our young people. They have gone far beyond the boundaries of their own organizations to lead their entire sector. In the process they have lifted the Alliance. And it is no exaggeration to say that, without their energies, their commitment and their leadership, the accomplishments of the past decade would not have been possible, and our goals for the next decade would not be attainable.

Promise Heroes

Presidents George H.W. Bush and William J. Clinton

As the co-founders of the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, Presidents Bush and Clinton challenged the country to make our children a national priority. Their call to action—to see that every child received Five Promises—launched the movement that became the America's Promise Alliance. Both President Bush and President Clinton have devoted their lives to public service, and today we celebrate their vision, which led to the founding of our Alliance.

The Atlantic Philanthropies

The Atlantic Philanthropies is committed to bringing about lasting change in the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable people, including our nation's children and youth. Believing that all children deserve the opportunity to lead fulfilling lives, regardless of economic circumstances, they seek to make lasting improvements in the lives of disadvantaged young people through preventive programs. The Atlantic Philanthropies is focused on consistently keeping disadvantaged children and youth engaged in learning, healthy and connected to key supports. Since 2005, they have pledged more than \$13 million in support of the America's Promise Alliance efforts to deliver more fundamental resources to our nation's at-risk children.

James L. Barksdale

After earning a reputation as one of America's most innovative CEOs, Jim Barksdale has focused much of his energy on the well-being of young people. In 2000, he gave \$100 million to the State of Mississippi to create the Barksdale Reading Institute, and he has remained a creative and consistent advocate for early childhood development and improving schools. After Hurricane Katrina, he

funded and agreed to lead Mississippi's recovery planning. Moving with his wife to the devastated Gulf Coast, he lived alongside FEMA relief workers and oversaw development of a multidisciplinary rebuilding plan. He has recently pledged \$5 million to improve the lives of the youngest victims of the hurricane devastation through the power of the Five Promises.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation and Casey Family Programs

Established by United Parcel Service founder Jim Casey in 1948, the Annie E. Casey Foundation is the world's largest philanthropy dedicated to improving the lives of disadvantaged children and their families. Casey Family Programs were established in 1966 especially to serve families in the child welfare system. The Foundation also publishes KIDS COUNT, which collects and reports data on the condition of children and families and tracks changes in outcomes from year to year, inspiring the nation to do better by our kids.

Raymond G. Chambers

Without Ray Chambers, America's Promise would not exist. As a planner, organizer and funder, he was instrumental in bringing about the Presidents' Summit. His work with the America's Promise Alliance is part of a long arc of service focused on young people. He co-founded the National Mentoring Partnership and has worked tirelessly on behalf of Communities In Schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, the Points of Light Foundation and other national partners. As founder of the Amelior Foundation, he directs most of his U.S. philanthropic efforts toward at-risk youth. A mentor himself, he leads by example and continues to be a board leader and an inspiration to our work today.

Mayor David N. Cicilline

Since becoming mayor of Providence, Rhode Island, in 2003, David Cicilline has produced remarkable results for the young people of his city. Energetically engaging city government along with public and private partners as agents of holistic youth development, he has assembled a consortium to provide children with the services they need most. Under the Mayor's leadership, the Providence after School Alliance has become a national model for optimizing services for middle-school children. Today he helps lead the Committee on Jobs, Education & Workforce for the U.S. Conference of Mayors and is a vocal, visible, powerful ally for disadvantaged youth and the America's Promise Alliance.

Ford Motor Company Fund

A longstanding supporter of America's Promise, the Ford Motor Company Fund has contributed nearly \$7 million during the Alliance's first decade to develop Promise Stations, an innovative technology initiative in more than 10 communities. Through the Ford Partnership for Advanced Studies, the Fund provides high school students with academically rigorous 21st century learning experiences. The Fund also supports Driving Skills for Life, a teen-focused auto safety initiative. The Ford Fund is an important supporter and ally for the Alliance in securing better outcomes for our most disadvantaged youth.

State Farm Insurance Companies

State Farm, under the leadership of its CEO, Ed Rust, has been a tireless leader on behalf of better education and better workforce preparedness. State Farm has also effectively led a national movement that engages millions of young people in community service each year. State Farm is the presenting sponsor for National Youth Service Day, the largest service event in the world, reaching more than 60 million people. State Farm is also the presenting sponsor of *Every Child, Every Promise*, and the biannual report of our Alliance serving as the benchmark for our nation's progress in delivering more of the Five Promises to more of our nation's young people.

Founding Partners

Boys & Girls Clubs – now 4,000 clubs serving 4.8 million youth

Communities In Schools – now in 27 states serving more than 2 million young people

Corporation for National and Community Service – responsible for more than 500,000 AmeriCorps volunteers since 1994

MENTOR – now in 25 states, 3 million children enjoy the benefits of mentoring

Points of Light Foundation – mobilizing millions of volunteers through a nationwide network of Volunteer Centers

United Way of America – through 2,350 affiliates, helping children succeed and families become stronger and more self-sufficient

And special thanks to the founding funders:

- Allstate
- The Amelior Foundation
- Annie E. Casey Foundation
- DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund
- The Ford Foundation
- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
- The W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- The Charles Steward Mott Foundation
- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- Pew Charitable Trusts

The Alliance Partners are the true heroes, fulfilling the Five Promises every day for millions of our nation's young people who most need our support.

"America's Promise and the Five Promises are fundamental to everything we do. The Five Promises are in our DNA, every one of our Boys and Girls Clubs."

-- Roxanne Spillett, President, Boys & Girls Clubs of America

Promise Champions

In these first 10 years, more than 1,000 champions rallied behind the Five Promises.

Together they are the inspiration and the embodiment of the original vision of the Presidents' Summit for America's Future:

100 Black Men of America, Inc. for its 10,000 members mentoring more than 100,000 young people annually.

AIG for matching their employees' volunteer time with paid time off to tutor and mentor, a commitment that has helped improve schools and the communities in which they live and do business.

Ambassador and Mrs. Walter Annenberg who, through their Foundation and personal example, changed the lives of millions of children and youth and helped to create America's Promise.

American Academy of Pediatrics and its 60,000 pediatricians who are creating a national agenda for children to provide all with quality healthcare and to advance the educational and social needs of every child.

American Bankers Association for understanding the connection between the Five Promises and a healthy economy and for enlisting 2,500 community banks nationwide to become Banks of Promise.

America's Second Harvest for providing millions of children and families with emergency food assistance through its 200 food banks and food recovery initiatives.

Best Friends Foundation for its character-building curriculum that has raised expectations, reduced risky behavior, and improved the academic achievement for adolescents nationwide.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America for doubling the number of children it serves (now at 250,000) while reaching out to help new populations of at-risk children through dedicated programs

Jean Case of the Case Foundation for being a pioneer in the world of philanthropy in promoting and supporting civic engagement and service and for bringing the power of the Internet to millions of disadvantaged youth.

Capital One for sponsoring the *100 Best Communities for Young People* and for helping to make our hometowns great places to grow up.

City Year for launching City Year Philadelphia during the Summit and organizing its service around the Five Promises.

Dr. Johnnetta Cole who as an extraordinary leader and educator also led the United Way of America's movement toward community impact and the alleviation of poverty.

CVS for supporting the academic and career development of a million young people in the next five years through its Pathways to Pharmacy.

Charles Cawley of MBNA, who framed the philanthropy of the company's foundation around the Five Promises.

4H for building the character and competence of 60 million young people in its first 100 years and for the vision of 'head, heart, hands and health' which is alive in its 6 million young members today.

The Forum for Youth Investment for its Ready by 21 initiative to ensure that all young people reach age 21 ready for college work and life.

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for bold and innovative investments in the belief that all children, regardless of their circumstances, need and deserve an education that prepares them for college, for work and for life.

Hallmark Cards for sending information about the importance of childhood immunizations to new parents, in one year reaching 65 percent of the country's new births.

Hands On Network for its big goals to grow the nation's volunteer pool by 10 percent and for the track record of its 66 affiliates around the world and 66 AmeriCorps Alums chapters.

Harper Collins who not only donated the proceeds of Alma Powell's *America's Promise* and *My Little Red Wagon* children's books, but who also donated thousands to First Book to ensure that more children had a chance to read them.

The Home Depot for sponsoring Kaboom! and pledging to build 1,000 playgrounds in 1,000 days

ING for its focus on improving the financial literacy among students and support for initiatives to improve high school graduation rates, especially in the District of Columbia.

Junior Achievement for broadening the horizons of millions of young people and for building a bridge between their education and their future careers.

W. K. Kellogg Foundation for the sustained investments in helping people help themselves, such as the nearly \$40 million the foundation has devoted to restoring the lives of children and families in the Gulf Coast.

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for its Bus Bank, a fleet of buses that transport young people (and their families) to events at the performing arts center.

Lenscrafters for fulfilling a commitment to provide free vision care to 1 million needy individuals, especially children, between 1997-2003, and for setting a new goal to reach 7 million people by 2008.

Bill Milliken, founder of Communities In Schools, for improving the lives of millions of disadvantaged youth with the power of his four basics on which the Five Promises were built.

National Association of Community Health Centers for providing quality health care to 16 million people, twice the number they served ten years ago.

National Governors Association for supporting governors in ensuring the readiness of high school students for college, work, and citizenship and for creating a compact among governors to standardize their measurement of graduation rates. Two examples are **Gov. Rod Blagojevich** (IL) for his children's health initiative, Covering All Kids; and **Governor Joe Manchin** (WV) for restructuring WV education around 21st Century skills.

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation whose founders believed their company had a responsibility to its employees, to its customers, and to the community at large and whose foundation has devoted more than \$500 million to improving children's lives in the past 10 years.

Radio Flyer for their Little Red Wagon, the symbol of the hopes and dreams of children and the way to carry them into the future.

Catherine Reynolds, for her foundation, Ready for School, which provides hearing and vision assessments for 65% of the county's newborns.

Mayor Joseph Riley of Charleston, SC, for building all his efforts for children and youth since 1997 around the framework of the Five Promises.

The Search Institute for its 40 Developmental Assets from which the Five Promises were distilled and for its applied research focused on positive youth development.

Share our Strength for its action plan to end childhood hunger in Washington, D.C., and for fighting hunger across the nation.

SOS Children's Villages-USA for providing permanent homes and families to abused, abandoned or orphaned children.

Morgan Stanley for its "What a Difference a Day Makes" initiative, which encourages U.S.-based employees to volunteer 24 hours per year toward projects that fulfill the Five Promises. The average employee volunteer contributed 72 hours per year.

Oracle, for its Help Us Help Foundation, which donated more than 12,000 computers and 2,400 laser printers to more than 400 U.S. public schools and youth organizations in just three years.

Sappi Fine Paper, for being a great place to work and for promoting the power of the Five Promises through its corporate philanthropy.

Senators Jeff Bingaman (NM) and Lamar Alexander (TN) for championing education and for envisioning, sponsoring and gaining passage of the PACE Act (Protecting America's Competitive Edge) to improve the education and career readiness of the nation's youth.

United Parcel Service for contributing more than \$12 million in the past 10 years to help nonprofit organizations better manage their volunteers.

US Chamber of Commerce for putting its business muscle behind improving the policies and practices to ensure young people graduate on time, with the skills needed for the workforce.

United States Department of State for its Hometown Diplomats Program, through which the officers visited their hometowns to meet with students in grades K-12 and discuss careers in diplomacy.

Vision Service Plan for providing more than 50,000 low-income, uninsured young people with free eye exams and eyeglasses since the Summit.

The Volunteer Center Network for galvanizing millions of volunteers of all ages and backgrounds to solve the nation's most serious social problems.

YMCA of the USA and its half a million volunteers who provide health and human service support — from child care to summer camp — to nearly 10 million children and youth in 10,000 communities.

Youth Build for engaging over 68,000 low-income students and helping them graduate from school and creating a career. They've have built or rehabilitated 16,000 units of affordable housing in America's poorest urban and rural communities.

“America needs a catalyst. If we did not right now have America's Promise, we would have to invent it, because what America's Promise is bringing to this nation is a shared vision that works for all... America's Promise is the catalytic champion that can't possibly do all of the work, but mobilizes us to take advantage of our power in the lives of kids.”

-- Dr. Peter Benson, President, Search Institute