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Wicomico County/City of Salisbury 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

Wicomico County/City of Salisbury, MD— America's Promise Alliance (the Alliance), the nation's largest alliance dedicated to children and youth, in partnership with Capital One, today announced that Wicomico County has been named a winner of its 2008 *100 Best Communities for Young People (100 Best)* 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.

This is the third consecutive year that Wicomico County/City of Salisbury has been named a 100 Best community. Wicomico County/City of Salisbury, the only jurisdiction in Maryland to win, was named a *100 Best* community in large part because of their commitment to youth initiatives, programs and actions that ensures all children have access to the Five Promises and families have access to positive community resources. Additionally, Salisbury has its own program, Salisbury's Promise, which unites the AmeriCorps program at Salisbury University to provide youth with the opportunity to serve their community, including contributing hand-made gifts and cards for nursing home residents. Another program, CANstruction, unites schools and their faith-based partners to collect food for charities. Several elementary and middle schools are using Character Counts, where students work with Habitat for Humanity and support March of Dimes and American Cancer Society by participating in walk-a-thons, among other charitable activities. The City also actively works with Salisbury University to provide internships for local students.

"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.

Wicomico County Executive Richard M. Pollitt, Jr., reacted to the good news with this statement, “To be honored for the third consecutive year as one of our nation’s *100 Best Communities for Young People* is testament to the high value Wicomico places on our children and to our commitment to raise them in a loving and nurturing environment. Every citizen in our county should be proud of this recognition as a solid example of what is right in our community.”

Mayor Barrie Tilghman said, “I am thrilled that America’s Promise has honored the great work of Salisbury’s Promise for a third year in a row. Many individuals spend many hours to ensure that the youth in this area have every opportunity to succeed and have a secure and nurturing environment in which to grow.”

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

Headquartered in McLean, Virginia, **Capital One Financial Corporation** (www.capitalone.com) is a financial holding company, with 732 locations in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Texas and Louisiana. 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. Capital One’s subsidiaries collectively had \$83.3 billion in deposits and \$146.4 billion in managed loans outstanding as of September 30, 2007. Capital One, a Fortune 500 company, trades on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "COF" and is included in the S&P 100 index.