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**MIRACLE CORNERS GEARS UP FOR 13TH YOUTH LEADERSHIP RETREAT****Youth from Around the World to Share Ideas about Creating Change
in their Communities****MCW Alumni Ventures Fund Recipient to be Announced at Open Doors Ceremony**

NEW YORK, July 9, 2010 — More than forty youth from around the world will descend on Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont next week for Miracle Corners of the World's 13th Annual Youth Leadership Retreat. The retreat, which begins on Thursday, July 15 and ends Thursday, July 22, aims to work with youth to identify challenges in their communities and to visualize goals and plans to make a difference.

“Once again, we have aimed to create a comprehensive and creative program that will challenge the group, but also ensure that they have a good and interactive time,” said Yasmin Elachi, the retreat coordinator.

This year's participants, 16 to 21, include American, Bosnian, British, Chinese, Indian, Israeli, Italian, Kenyan, Kyrgyzstani, Nigerian, Palestinian, Rwandan, Somali, South African, Tanzanian, and Zambian youth. More than a dozen of the participants have participated in past youth retreats and will return as “mentors.”

“Through entrepreneurial and cross-cultural communication activities, the mentors will put forward the same skill sets they learned as youth participants,” continued Elachi.

The Program

The retreat presents a chance for each participant to prepare a “vision plan,” which identifies a specific challenge in their community, such as the lack of after school programs for high-school students or limited oral healthcare, and the concrete steps that the participant can take to address the challenge. It also provides an opportunity for the participants to share the creative social justice work they do in their own communities, learn from each other, and build a global network of support.

This year's program focuses on social entrepreneurship, with sessions led by Dr. David Finney, Champlain College President, and an interactive panel with Rod Jacobson, Lyndon State College Business Professor, and Tara Lynn Scheidet, an eco-friendly designer. Andy Barker, Director of Ben & Jerry's Social Mission Program, will speak about how global companies can work with local communities to make a difference by using local products. Senegalese Chef Pierre Thiam, a cookbook author and the owner of Le Grand Dakar Restaurant, will speak about entrepreneurship and the food movement, which will help the participants prepare for a trip to Shelburne Farms and discussions on sustainability and conservation.

Steve Kess, Vice President of Global Professional Relations at Henry Schein, Inc. will lead a session on building teams and strategic partnerships. A special workshop on leadership development will be led by Gary Kadi of NextLevel Practice.

“Our Youth Leadership Retreat program represents the true origin of MCW—in that for the last ten years we have delivered on our promise to provide youth with the opportunity to learn and exchange ideas to create change,” said Eddie Bergman, MCW co-founder and executive director. “By providing youth with the skills necessary to implement vision plans, we are playing a role in preparing the next generation of change makers.”

Open Doors Ceremony and the 2010 Alumni Ventures Fund

The retreat concludes with *Open Doors*—a special celebratory evening program for the participants, their friends and parents, and members of the MCW community. The event, to be held at the Kimmel Center at New York University, on Thursday, July 22 from 5:30 to 9:30 pm, includes an MCW program update, presentations on vision plans and cultural performances. To event, email info@miraclecorners.org.

MCW will also announce the recipient of the 2010 Alumni Ventures Fund at the Open Doors ceremony. In its second year, the new fund provides micro grants to graduates of MCW’s youth leadership retreat, enabling them to pursue social ventures in their communities. In addition to the start-up funding, recipients are with an MCW mentor, who will help them develop and implement their venture plans, manage their finances, and monitor and evaluate their work.

Sponsors of the 2010 retreat include: Ben & Jerry’s Burlington Scoop Shop, Blueberry Hill Inn, Breugger’s Bagels, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, and Lyndon State College in Vermont, as well as Zabars and the School of Continuing and Professional Studies at New York University (NYU) in New York. The retreat is made possible through MCW’s fundraising efforts at its annual gala celebration in the spring.

For more information or to interview one of the youth retreat participants or speakers, email info@miraclecorners.org.

About Miracle Corners of the World

Miracle Corners of the World (MCW) is a non-profit organization founded in 1999 with the mission to empower youth to become leaders of change. Based in New York, MCW serves youth through Leadership Training, Community Center, and Partner Initiative programs (Oral Healthcare, Genocide Prevention, and Container initiatives). For more on MCW, please visit www.miraclecorners.org.

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