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MENTOR ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS OF SPOTLIGHT AWARD
*Senator Tom Harkin and Amii Young of Everybody Wins! DC to be honored at
Spotlight on Mentoring Event in Washington, DC on May 3, 2006*

Alexandria, Va. – MENTOR, a leading advocate and resource for the expansion of mentoring initiatives nationwide, today announced that six mentoring pairs will receive the first annual MENTOR's Spotlight Award. The award was created to honor outstanding mentoring pairs that exemplify the powerful impact mentoring relationships can have on the lives of young people. The six recipients were selected from nearly 200 nominations received from across the country.

The recipients of MENTOR's Spotlight Award will be honored at an upcoming event in Washington, DC on May 3, 2006. The event is focused on closing the nation's mentoring gap: nearly 15 million young people are currently in need of caring adult mentors. At the event, MENTOR will unveil a comprehensive roadmap, titled "The National Agenda for Action: How to Close America's Mentoring Gap," detailing the steps necessary to unite young people with mentors.

Local mentoring pair Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) and 10-year-old Amii Young have been selected as one of the six national recipients of MENTOR's Spotlight Award. The two were matched more than two years ago through Everybody Wins! DC's "Power Lunch" program at Brent Elementary in Washington, DC. Amii says that since she's been working with Senator Harkin over the past two years, her reading has improved, especially vocabulary and comprehension. The Senator has also helped Amii begin setting goals and encouraged her to become a writer and better reader. But Senator Harkins's influence has gone beyond reading. Amii says that Senator Harkin is "an honorable man. His character has taught me to strive to be a person of honor."

When announcing the award, MENTOR Executive Director Gail Manza remarked: "Senator Harkin and Amii Young are an outstanding mentoring pair that demonstrate how profoundly a caring adult mentor can positively influence the life of a young person. By showcasing this truly special mentoring relationship, we hope to inspire more adults to join us in creating a culture of mentoring in America today. After all, if a busy Senator can take the time to be a mentor, so can we all."

“We are so proud of Amii and Senator Harkin. Their weekly commitment is transforming both of their lives,” says Mary Salander, Everybody Wins! DC executive director. “This award is a beautiful tribute also to all of the Everybody Wins! DC Reading Mentors and their student partners who take time each week to share their lives with one another.”

Senator Harkin is one of some 1,500 adults who volunteer weekly in Everybody Wins! DC programs to mentor and share the joy of reading with their younger student partners.

“Mentoring and reading with a student like Amii puts into perspective the critical role each of us plays in opening the doors of opportunity for all of our nation’s children,” says Harkin. “Our vision with Everybody Wins! DC is simple and straightforward, yet can bring about profound change in the lives of young students: expose children to literature, give them a positive role model, inspire them to read, and you will make a difference in their lives.”

As part of the award, Freddie Mac and MENTOR will provide an awards package totaling \$7,500, including: a \$5,000 educational scholarship for Amii Young, a \$500 award for Senator Tom Harkin and a \$2,000 donation to Everybody Wins! DC.

About MENTOR:

MENTOR is leading the national movement to expand the world of quality mentoring. MENTOR believes that, with the help and guidance of an adult mentor, each child can discover how to unlock and achieve his or her potential. As the nation’s leading advocate and expert resource for mentoring, MENTOR is dedicated to delivering the research, policy recommendations, and practical performance tools needed to help mentoring organizations effectively serve young people and make mentoring a reality for more of America's young people.

About Everybody Wins! DC

Everybody Wins! DC (EW!DC) reaches more than 3,000 at-risk students each year in 30 Title I public elementary schools throughout the Washington Metro Area. One of three literacy and mentoring programs run by EW!DC, the Power Lunch program benefits children academically and socially by bringing a diverse selection of children's literature into the schools and pairing students with caring adult readers.

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