



For Immediate Release
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Ames 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

Ames, IA— America's Promise Alliance (the Alliance), the nation's largest alliance dedicated to children and youth, in partnership with Capital One, today announced that Ames 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.

Ames was named one of the *100 Best Communities* in part because of the community's involvement in the national "*CHARACTER COUNTS!*" *Coalition*. This program encourages community involvement in developing citizens through the "Six Pillars of Character" (trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship). The City of Ames, including the Ames Police Department and Mayor, along with the Ames Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), The Ames Tribune, Ames Community Schools, Ames365.com, KASI/KCCQ Radio, and a number of local businesses, work together to facilitate the program. The Chamber facilitates the Education Connections Committee which serves to strengthen the relationship between area businesses and local school districts. The city boasts also one of the most effective mentoring programs in the state. The Great Relationships in Pairs (GRIP) Mentoring Program, managed by Youth & Shelter Services, made over 400 matches last year and has more active volunteers than any other mentoring program in Iowa.

"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.

“The Ames community takes great pride in their youth and the opportunities that are available for them to live well, learn, grow, and succeed,” said Dan Culhane, President and CEO of the Ames Chamber of Commerce. “Due in part to the unique collaboration between the community and the university, many of the programs and resources available to youth are widely endorsed and supported by a number of organizations, including the Ames Community School District, the City of Ames, Iowa State University, and Youth & Shelter Services, to name a few. The proof is evident through the countless programs, clubs, organizations, policies, initiatives, and support services that are available to local youth. We as a Chamber are pleased to have written and submitted the application. It’s a great honor for Ames to be recognized as one of the *100 Best Communities for Young People* and we are excited that we could help Ames get the recognition it deserves.”

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.

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