

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA TO ACCEPT GREAT FRIEND TO KIDS AWARD**

— Association of Children's Museums Recognizes "The Positive Place for Kids" at InterActivity 2009 —

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Association of Children's Museums (ACM) will present its *Great Friend to Kids Award* to Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) at its 22<sup>nd</sup> annual conference InterActivity 2009: *Declare Your Impact* in Philadelphia, April 28-30. BGCA was selected for its long-time commitment to helping young people reach their full potential as productive, caring citizens. Presented annually InterActivity, the award honors those who have made significant and outstanding contributions to strengthening education and advancing the interests of children.

Members of the media are welcome to attend the *Great Friend to Kids Award* plenary session, scheduled for Tuesday, April 28, 9:00 a.m.-10:15 a.m. at the Philadelphia City Center Hotel's Liberty Ballroom; contact ACM to obtain a media pass or for interview requests prior to InterActivity.

"Children need a safe place to play and mentors who care about their future," says ACM Executive Director Janet Rice Elman. "Boys & Girls Clubs are neighborhood resources that continually earn the trust of underserved youth, and help them to make healthy choices and to pursue their dreams.

For more than 100 years, Boys & Girls Clubs of America has been changing and saving young lives, providing hope and opportunity for kids who need them most. Today, more than 4,300 Clubs serve some 4.8 million young people through BGCA membership and community outreach. Known as *The Positive Place for Kids*, Boys & Girls Clubs can be found all across the country and on U.S. military bases throughout the world. Clubs provide young people 6-18 years old with guidance-oriented character development programs conducted by trained, professional staff. In a recent Harris Survey of Club alumni, 57 percent said BGCA saved their life.

Roxanne Spillett, President & CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of America, will accept the *Great Friend to Kids Award* on behalf of BGCA. During the award ceremony, Spillett will provide a keynote address about the recently launched Impact 2012, a five-year strategic plan that positions BGCA more powerfully than ever as an advocacy organization of national scope and influence.

Spillett was selected as one of the "Power 50" by *The Non-Profit Times* for three consecutive years. She also received the Excellence in National Executive Leadership Award presented by the National Human Services Assembly, an association of leading nonprofits in the fields of health, human and community development and human services. In July 2006, *Newsweek* cited Spillett and BGCA as one of "15 People Who Make America Great," part of the magazine's annual Giving Back Awards.

ACM initiated the *ACM Great Friend to Kids Award* in 1991 to honor individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions toward strengthening education and improving the lives of children. Past recipients include Dr. Joe L. Frost (2008), for his dedication to advocate for a child's right to play; the early architects of Head Start program, Dr. Bettye Caldwell, Dr. Julius B. Richmond and Dr. Edward F. Zigler (2007), Dr. T. Berry Brazelton (2006), Erikson Institute (2005), Kevin Clash (2004), Barbara Bush (2003), UNICEF (2002), Dr. David Elkind (2001), Dr. Robert Coles (2000), Children's Television Workshop (1999), Hillary Rodham Clinton (1998), Dr. James P. Comer (1997), Fred Rogers (1996), Dr. Ernest L. Boyer (1995), Peggy Charren (1994), Marian Wright Edelman (1993), Dr. Howard Gardner (1992), and Michael Spock (1991).

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More than 600 participants are expected to attend InterActivity 2009: *Declare Your Impact*, April 28-30. Please Touch Museum, Philadelphia's children's museum, will serve as the local host for the conference. InterActivity 2009 program content includes sessions that confirm the ways children's museums impact local economies, how play impacts the learning lives of future grown-ups, a debate on the impacts of new technologies on developing minds, and how children's museums effectively partner with local and national organizations to affect the well-being and learning lives of families.

Keynote speakers for the conference include BGCA President and CEO Roxanne Spillett; Greg Mortenson, who talk about his efforts to build schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan for young girls — the subject of his *New York Times* bestselling book *Three Cups of Tea*; and Rebecca Flora, U.S. Green Building Council Senior Vice-President, who will address the environmental challenges that confront us and the crucial role that green building plays in meeting these challenges.

ACM is a professional service organization for children's museums around the world. ACM's mission is to build the capacity of children's museums to serve as town squares for children and families where play inspires creativity and lifelong learning. There are approximately 400 children's museums internationally. Children's museums reach more than 31 million annually. For links to ACM's international list of museums and tips on making the most of the children's museum experience, visit [www.ChildrensMuseums.org](http://www.ChildrensMuseums.org).

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