



PRESS RELEASE

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DC ALLIANCE OF YOUTH ADVOCATES (DCAYA) AND PARENTS RALLY FOR MAYOR FENTY TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS

-Youth Coalition Seeks 6 Percent of \$100 Million City Surplus-

October 30, 2007—Washington, D.C.—Young people, parents, concerned residents and youth advocates from across the city will join The DC Alliance of Youth Advocates (DCAYA) on the steps of the Wilson Building on Tuesday, October 30, at 5:00 pm with a clear message for Mayor Adrian Fenty: invest \$6 million of the city's \$100 million surplus to preserve summer youth programs in 2008.

Mayor Fenty's emergency budget proposal, which allocates the city's \$100 million surplus to D.C. programs and initiatives, does not include any additional dollars for after-school and summer programs. The Mayor's proposal, now before the DC City Council, while committing significant funds to strengthening D.C. Public Schools (DCPS), makes no investment in young people's after-school or summertime needs.

Without additional funds, dozens of summer programs that help thousands of youth build skills, increase academic achievement and develop healthy behaviors will be eliminated or dramatically cut. Since 2006, funding from the city to the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation's summer programming has been cut by more than half, from \$6 million in FY 2006 to \$2.5 million in FY 2008, leaving summer programs in real danger.

"We understand the city is invested in improving DCPS - so are we," said Eshauna Smith, executive director for DCAYA. "However, after-school and summer programs need increased funding to be



strengthened as well--they both go hand in hand. We can't ignore youth in the summer, cut after-school programs during the school year and think we're in any way addressing the needs of young people in our city."

"The surplus gives the city an opportunity to provide our youth the necessary programs that help keep them from skipping school and falling into risky behaviors," continued Ms. Smith. "An investment in out-of-school-time and summer programs is truly a great investment in our city's future - one that will pay returns long into the future."

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Max Skolnik, co-founder and executive director of Kid Power-DC and a member of DCAYA's Board of Directors, added, "On-going and adequate funding is critical for the survival and life of many programs like ours. After school and summer programs enhance education and serve as life savers for children throughout the DC community. At Kid Power-DC, we work with more than 100 young people year-round and offer them the opportunity to connect with and learn about our community's heritage and history. Unfortunately, cuts in funding mean fewer kids participating, fewer field trips and fewer educational and growth opportunities for young people in our city."

Summer programs are credited with helping fight the learning loss that occurs during the summer months and, by providing healthy meals and keeping youth active, also help to address the challenge of obesity.

In D.C, CYITC uses funds from the city to make grants to community-based organizations that operate summer arts, academic enrichment and recreational programs. In 2007, CYITC made grants to more than 100 organizations, reaching more than 10,000 children and youth throughout the city.

Mayor Fenty's emergency budget proposal is scheduled for a vote with the DC City Council in early November.

About DCAYA

DC Alliance for Youth Advocates (DCAYA) is a citywide coalition of more than 50 nonprofit organizations that works to ensure policies, programs and practices within the District of Columbia that provide and propel youth into productive and healthy adulthood. www.dc-aya.org

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