



NEWS RELEASE

June 6, 2008

**Contact: Renate Mitchell of
NPJ Advertising & Public
Relations, Inc.
202-347-6464
202-421-8011 Cell**

**Local Non-Profits Receive Over \$100,000 from *Together is Better*®
*Funds will help to build Healthy Marriages and Relationships***

Washington, DC - Nine District of Columbia community-based and faith-based organizations have received grants totaling \$120,000 from *Together is Better*®. The funds, provided by the National Center for Fathering, will be used for activities that provide responsible fatherhood, marriage and relationship education and support services to teens, young adults, single parents, unmarried couples with children, engaged couples or couples planning to marry, and married couples.

Together is Better® is a District-wide project to strengthen DC families, marriages and communities. The goal of the campaign is to improve child well-being by strengthening couple relationships through marriage and relationship education, financial incentives and supportive services that encourage healthy families. Through *Together is Better*®, DC couples may qualify for a 3:1 match of their savings by opening a Marriage Development Account (MDA), which can be used to purchase a home, pay for education or invest in their small business. The District of Columbia is the only area of the country where MDAs are available.

“We are pleased to fund these projects that we believe will enlighten youth and adults on the benefits of responsible fatherhood, healthy relationships and marriage, which in turn will yield healthy children, families and communities,” said Carey Casey, CEO of the National Center for Fathering.

The National Center for Fathering has partnered with LifeStarts, Capital Area Asset Builders (CAAB) and the DC Metropolitan Healthy Marriage and Relationship Coalition since 2006 to spearhead the *Together is Better*® Campaign in the District. “These organizations are great additions to the *Together is Better*® team and will allow us to serve DC residents better.”

Grantees represent projects in all quadrants of the city; and have received up to \$20,000 to support the following activities:

- **Wedded Bliss Foundation** will produce *First Comes Love*, a series of marriage education classes for low-income, romantically involved teen couples in Ward 8;
- **Empowering Minds for the Future, Inc.** will produce the *Focus on Fitness* Project to improve physical fitness and interpersonal relationships, *Quenching the Fathers Thirst*: a responsible fatherhood training course; and the *Hartford Financial Guide* to improve financial literacy;

- **The Institute for Behavioral Change, Inc.** will implement the *Teen Prevention and Intervention Program* to conduct group prevention programming and individual intervention for adolescent fathers who are at high risk for involvement in dating violence;
- **ULTRA (Urban Life Training & Reality Assessment)** will implement the *ULTRA Teen Choice Healthy Intimate Personal Relationship* project for young people in Wards 5 and 6;
 - **STRIVE DC, Inc.** will conduct *Staying Together*, a marriage and relationship education program with responsible fatherhood and parenting components for families where one or both of the parents are unemployed;
- **ALS-Singles Wholeness & Marriage Savers** will provide relationship skills and education on the benefits of marriage and two-parent involvement to couples in Wards 1, 5 and 8;
- **The DC Metropolitan Healthy Marriage and Relationship Coalition (DCHMRC)** will provide marriage and relationship education sessions to ex-offenders and their partners in Wards 5 and 6 for their *Baby, I'm Back* program;
- **Howard University School of Social Work** will examine 15 heterosexual African American couples for a study called *Healthy Relationship Education for African-American Couples: Targeting Domestic Violence and HIV Education*;
- **The Spoken Word** will engage couples and single individuals in web-based forums for discussion and training sessions on topics including healthy relationships, successful marriage, responsible fatherhood and financial stability through their *Family Forum Project*;

All projects will be funded from June to December 2008 with an aim to leverage funding to sustain program activities after the end of the year. The Capital Area Asset Builders (www.caab.org) will provide training and technical assistance to grantees on financial literacy and the Marriage Development Account and Pre-Marriage Development savings program.

The mission of the National Center for Fathering is to improve the well-being of children by inspiring and equipping men to be more effectively involved in the lives of children. In response to a dramatic trend towards fatherlessness in America, the Center was founded in 1990 to conduct research on fathers and fathering, and to develop practical resources to prepare dads for nearly every fathering situation. The National Center for Fathering recently launched Championship Fathering, a nationwide campaign to enlist men to be the fathers, grandfathers and father figures their children need. Visit www.fathers.com/cf for additional information.