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Youth Service America and Festival of Children Foundation
Collaborating on Nationwide Youth Ambassadors Program
in Honor of National Child Awareness Month, September 2012

Youth to receive funding, training and resources for service campaigns that create positive change in the lives of young people; nominations open through July 22

Costa Mesa, Calif. –Festival of Children Foundation and YSA (Youth Service America) are collaborating on the National Child Awareness Month Ambassador Program. Beginning in September 2012 in recognition of National Child Awareness Month, the newly-created national initiative offers exceptionally service-minded teens and young adults the funding, training and resources to lead large-scale service projects that create positive change in the lives of young people.

The National Child Awareness Month Ambassador Program will engage youth leaders to develop large-scale campaigns around child welfare issues in their own communities. Fifty-one Youth Ambassadors, ages 16 to 22, will be selected: one per state, plus the District of Columbia. Youth Ambassadors craft campaigns that address specific, demonstrated child welfare issues in their communities, such as access to affordable healthcare, the drop-out crisis or child safety laws.

Now in its fifth year, National Child Awareness Month is an initiative spearheaded by Festival of Children Foundation to raise awareness about issues affecting children and encourage the nation's youth to take action. The Youth Ambassadors Program begins in September - during National Child Awareness Month – with a two-day training in Washington, D.C., at which the Ambassadors will begin planning their service projects. Youth Ambassadors will return to their home states to execute their campaigns, mobilizing their peers, engaging media and public officials, and raising awareness around their issue area. In addition, Youth Ambassadors receive:

- A \$1,000 grant to develop and implement a large-scale service project that addresses a specific child welfare issue in his or her home state
- Ongoing training and project support, and networking opportunities with other Youth Ambassadors across the country
- -A platform for their cause or issue-area

“National Child Awareness Month Ambassadors will have a unique opportunity to create change and serve as the leaders of today. As a group of 51 incredible young leaders, the Youth Ambassadors will form a powerful national network of young people who raise their collective voice as advocates for children. We applaud Festival of Children Foundation for their leadership in National Child Awareness Month,” said Steven A. Culbertson, President and CEO of YSA.

“Our children are the greatest legacy that our nation can invest in. National Child Awareness Month is an effective tool to increase awareness of the needs for children in our country,” added Sandy Segerstrom Daniels, Founder and Executive Director of Festival of Children Foundation.

Organizations, community groups and adult mentors may nominate youth ages 16 to 22 to represent their state and serve as a Youth Ambassador. Nominations are open through July 22, 2012. For additional program and eligibility requirements, or to nominate a young person, visit www.YSA.org/grants.

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