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Community Bridges Presented with Two Prestigious Nonprofit Credentials

SILVER SPRING, MD—Community Bridges, Inc. has earned two nonprofit distinctions this Fall: the *Seal of Excellence*—a nationally recognized accreditation that shows organizational and financial integrity as well as accountability of a well-run nonprofit; and the *Stamp of Approval*—a recognition awarded by the Catalogue of Philanthropy to the best nonprofits in the Greater Metropolitan area.



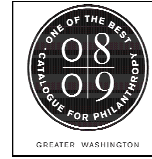
The first credential, the *Seal of Excellence*, is obtained through the *Standards For Excellence* program of the Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations (MANO). According to MANO, Standards for Excellence is the first program in the nation to promote self-regulation in the nonprofit sector. Designed to increase the public's trust in nonprofit organizations, MANO states that the code requires strict adherence to eight guiding principles and 55 rigorous benchmarks.

With the Board's backing and support, staff members began work on the accreditation process two years ago. The commitment was made based on MANO's research showing that organizations implementing the Standards for Excellence do better and are more sustainable. Community Bridges is one of only 75 organizations, out of 24,000 nonprofits in Maryland, that has earned this distinction.

“Community Bridges has accomplished all these attributes and deserves a round of applause for all the effort and work invested in obtaining this seal,” said Agnes Saenz, Board Member of MANO, who presented the award at our Open House on September 10, 2008. Certificates of recognition from Congressman Chris Van Hollen and State Delegate Sheila Hixson were also presented in honor of the accomplishment.

“Community Bridges is a small nonprofit in comparison to others that have applied for this certification. Qualifying to receive the Standards for Excellence certification is a testament to the quality of the leadership and management of our organization and the programs we provide,” said Molly Knopf, Community Bridges Board Chair. She went on to say that “the Board of Directors now has a greater ability to monitor and enforce our management systems, programs and services. This allows Community Bridges a better foundation upon which to serve the Montgomery County community.”

The organization is equally proud to announce its selection for inclusion in the 2008-09 Catalogue for Philanthropy: Greater Washington. One of only 68 organizations chosen from a field of 200 applicants, Community Bridges passed a stringent vetting process by a panel of 60 expert reviewers from area foundations, corporate giving programs, and larger non-profit organizations.



Community Bridges was first included in the Catalogue in 2004, enabling them to reach out to individuals who would otherwise never hear their story. The Catalogue also provides them with a stamp of approval as “one of the best small charities in the Washington, DC region,” according to Catalogue president Barbara Harmon.

As donors across the region are forced to make difficult economic choices regarding giving this year, organizations like Community Bridges are faced with an even tougher challenge than usual to obtain funding to meet their mission. Community Bridges is fortunate to be included in the Catalogue for Philanthropy, a credential to donors who want to make wise end-of-year contributions that will truly have impact. For more information on the Catalogue for Philanthropy, to view their listing, and even make a contribution, log on to www.cfp-dc.org.

Community Bridges empowers diverse girls to become exceptional students, positive leaders, and healthy young women. A grassroots nonprofit organization founded in 1997, Community Bridges is recognized as a leader in providing model empowerment and leadership programs for early adolescent girls in Montgomery County, MD.

To learn more about Community Bridges please visit www.communitybridges-md.org.

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