

**For Release**  
May 3, 2006

Contact: Michelle Mobley  
PH: 202-359-1957  
E: [michelle@heartofamerica.org](mailto:michelle@heartofamerica.org)

NASSP Contact: Shana Kemp  
PH: 240-338-7056  
E: [kemps@principals.org](mailto:kemps@principals.org)

## Press Release

**More than 100 top youth volunteers from across the U.S. will meet with students in DC Public Schools  
–to share the spirit of Community Service.**

**Washington, DC-** More than 100 middle level and high school students will meet with children of Meyer Elementary School (Ward 1) to share the value and importance of community service.

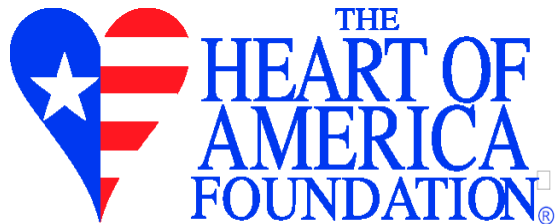
Each young leader is an honoree of The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. They will host small group sessions with elementary school children to share their personal commitment to volunteer service and demonstrate that youth are capable of making our community a better place to live.

After sharing their inspirational stories, these honorees will distribute **thousands of brand new books** to elementary schools in the District of Columbia. The students have been conducting their own book drives in their individual states, one student having collected 9,000 books alone. Literacy and education is the foundation to a bright future. **Ninety percent** of all fourth graders in the District of Columbia read below established proficiency level. **Sixty-nine percent** of DC fourth graders read below basic level and the inability to read is linked to **poverty, dependence on welfare, unemployment, and crime.**

The Heart of America Foundation® (HOA) uniquely combines character education, literacy and service learning. HOA has partnered with the National Association of Secondary School Principals and The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards to inspire the youth of the DC Public School's. Honorees from each state and the District of Columbia were chosen among 20,000 applicants.

When: Monday, May 8, 2006  
Time: 9:00 am  
Where: Meyer Elementary School  
2501 11<sup>th</sup> Street, NW~~Washington, DC 20001

The Heart of America Foundation®  
Michelle Mobley  
[michelle@heartofamerica.org](mailto:michelle@heartofamerica.org)



Camera

Visuals:

- The Prudential Spirit of Community Honorees
- Children receiving more than 3000 books
- Children listening to book readings by the Prudential Honorees

**About The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards:**

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards represents the United States' largest youth recognition program based exclusively on volunteer community service. The awards were created in 1995 by Prudential in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals to honor middle and high school students at the local, state and national level for outstanding service to others.

The program's goal is to applaud young people who already are making a positive difference in their towns and neighborhoods, and even more importantly, to inspire others to think about how they might contribute to the well being of their communities. Over the past eleven years, more than 70,000 young volunteers have been officially recognized for their work in their community. Honorees receive monetary prizes and participate in all-expenses paid four days of exciting activities celebrating their achievements in their communities.

**About The Heart of America Foundation®:**

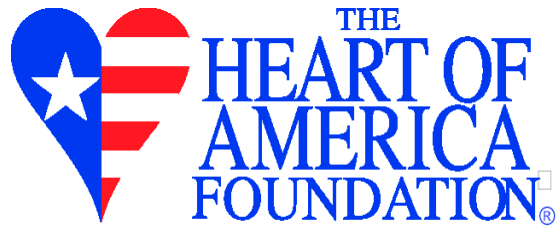
HOA's mission is to teach the values at the heart of America and to help people, particularly children, learn that they help themselves when they help others. Our goal is to give children everywhere the tools they need to read, succeed and make a difference. Our programs uniquely combine character education, literacy, and service learning. We are a national, nonsectarian, non-partisan, nonprofit, humanitarian organization.

**About the National Association of Secondary School Principals:**

NASSP – celebrating 90 years of excellence in school leadership, is the preeminent organization and the national voice for middle level and high school principals, assistant principals and aspiring school leaders. NASSP provides its members with the professional resources to serve as visionary leaders. NASSP promotes the intellectual growth, academic achievement, character development, leadership development, and physical well being of youth through its programs and student leadership services. NASSP administers the National Honor Society™, National Junior Honor Society™, and National Association of Student Councils™.

**Available for interview:**

- The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards Honorees
- Angie Halamandaris, President of The Heart of America Foundation®
- Rocco Marano, Director of Student Activities, National Association of Secondary School Principals
- Shirley Jones, Principal of Meyer Elementary School



**Background Information:**

- The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards can be found at [www.prudential.com/spirit](http://www.prudential.com/spirit) and [www.principals.org/prudential.cfm](http://www.principals.org/prudential.cfm).
- The Heart of America Foundation® [www.heartofamerica.org](http://www.heartofamerica.org)
- National Association of Secondary School Principals [www.principals.org](http://www.principals.org)