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Oak Park selected as one of 100 Best Communities for Young People

Oak Park has been named one of the country's *100 Best Communities for Young People* by *America's Promise Alliance*, an organization founded by former Secretary of State Colin Powell to help ensure children receive the fundamental building blocks they need to grow into effective adults.

Thanks to the recognition as one of best communities for youth, organizations within Oak Park are now eligible to apply for up to \$300,000 in grants from *America's Promise Alliance*. In honor of this achievement, a reception is scheduled for **5:30 – 7 p.m., Thurs., Jan. 31, at Village Hall, 123 Madison St.**

A wide range of private, public and not-for-profit Oak Park-based organizations worked together to prepare the application to become one of the *100 Best*. The application process included testimonials from leaders in the local youth community as to why Oak Park is one of the best in the nation, as well as details on socioeconomic factors and data on the activities available to young people within the Village.

Area organizations that helped Oak Park earn the *100 best* designation are Austin Boulevard Christian Church; Collaboration for Early Childhood Care and Education; Community Bank of Oak Park River Forest; Fellowship Christian Church; Hephzibah Children's Association; Infant Welfare Society; Oak Park Community Planning & Development Department; Oak Park Department of Public Health; Oak Park Education Foundation; Oak Park Elementary School District #97; Oak Park Police Department; Oak Park & River Forest High School District #200; Oak Park & River Forest Township Youth Services Division; Office of the Oak Park Village Clerk; Parenthesis Parent-Child Center; Park District of Oak Park; United Way of Oak Park, River Forest and Forest Park; Volunteer Center; West Suburban Special Recreation Association; and West Cook YMCA.

The *100 Best* competition began in 2005 and strives to honor communities that are dedicated to the advancement of developmental resources young people need for success in life, what the organization calls *The Five Promises* – caring adults, safe places, a healthy start, effective education and opportunities to help others. The competition is organized by *America's Promise Alliance*, the nation's largest alliance dedicated to children and youth.

Oak Park was chosen from a field of more than 300 communities throughout the United States that competed to be among the *100 Best Communities for Young People*.

For more information about the *100 Best* competition, and to see a complete list of the 2008 winners, visit www.americaspromise.org.

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