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Going Up: Dallas Teens to Benefit from Once-in-a-lifetime Opportunities with City's Top Leaders from Variety of Industries

Dallas Elevators Powered by Coca-Cola Debuts as
First Program of its Kind for Teens in the U.S.

DALLAS (Sept. 9, 2008) - Coca-Cola, in conjunction with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas, today launched *Dallas Elevators Powered by Coca-Cola*, a new program to bring extra enrichment and opportunities to a select group of students in the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas. The core mission encourages students to elevate their skills in the classroom, at home, in extra-curricular activities, and wherever their interests lie.

The *Dallas Elevators Powered by Coca-Cola* program, the first of its kind in the country, officially kicked off with an announcement at the Westin City Center Hotel. The program aims to nurture students' potential and provide interaction with top leaders for once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. Junior and senior high school students in the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas will be eligible for the program, and the first class will "graduate" in May 2009. The program has a dedicated website, www.dallaselevators.com.

"This program is unique and will offer students the opportunity to see the world from an entirely different perspective," said Ben Lawson, director of bottler sales and marketing with Coca-Cola. "Exposing students to business, arts, sports, entertainment, healthcare, hospitality, and many more areas can only broaden their views of the world. We wanted to provide positive influences in multiple industries and encourage them to look into the future and see how they can make a positive impact in our community."

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Dallas Elevators Powered by Coca-Cola is designed to provide real-life inspiration in several key areas of personal development through structured learning and interaction with leaders from diverse industries.

Dallas role models who volunteered to lend leadership to the program include:

- Dallas Independent School District Superintendent Dr. Michael Hinojosa
- Basketball Hall of Famer Nancy Lieberman
- Dallas Stars Professional Hockey Player Mike Modano
- Artist and Designer Brad Oldham
- Radio Personality Victoria Snee
- Dallas Mavericks President Terdema Ussery

Students in the program will have one-of-a-kind experiential learning opportunities community leaders. The program seeks to pair students with leaders in the student's area(s) of interest.

For example, a teen interested in the culinary arts might help create a five-star meal at one of the city's finest restaurants; a student interested in art might collaborate with a designer; and a teen with a passion for cars might shadow a technician at a luxury automotive dealership.

"*Dallas Elevators Powered by Coca-Cola* is an innovative program that clearly gives students incentives to stay in school," stated Dallas Mayor Tom Leppert. "Dallas has a high school drop out rate just over 60 percent. Through partnerships such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas and Coca-Cola, we can have an impact on that statistic. But more importantly, we can make a difference in kids' lives by encouraging them to find a passion and build a career."

The Dallas Elevators curriculum is centered on the acclaimed *Heart of a Champion* character development program. Heart of a Champion is a nine-month, comprehensive curriculum that utilizes innovative video, print and online tools to instill and reinforce positive character and life skills. For more than a decade, the program has produced measurable results in schools and after-school outlets around the nation.

The program will consist of five separate learning modules based on the founding principles of the Boys & Girls Club: character and leadership development; education and career development; health and life skills; sports, fitness, and recreation; and the arts.

“We appreciate Coca-Cola’s vision to create a program that will have tremendous impact on our community for many years to come,” said Charles English, president of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas. “By giving these students opportunities to explore interests and potential careers, we may open a door that will spark a flame of inspiration in them. *Dallas Elevators Powered by Coca-Cola* gives these young people a chance to expand their knowledge and sets them up to succeed.”

About Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Dallas (BGCD) has provided summer and after-school supplemental education programs to youth for more than 40 years. Since 1965, hundreds of thousands of youth have benefited from the programs offered at one or more of the 13 clubs that exist today throughout Dallas County. On any given day, more than 1,000 members walk through the doors of a BGCD facility. In 2007, over 10,800 registered members participated in five core program areas consisting of: education and career development; character and leadership development; health and life skills; the arts; and sports, fitness and recreation.

About The Coca-Cola Company

The Coca-Cola Company is the world’s largest beverage company, refreshing consumers with more than 450 sparkling and still brands. Along with Coca-Cola, recognized as the world’s most valuable brand, the Company’s portfolio includes 12 other billion-dollar brands, including Diet Coke, Fanta, Sprite, Coca-Cola Zero, vitaminwater, Powerade, Minute Maid and Georgia Coffee. Globally, Coca-Cola is the number one provider of sparkling beverages, juices and juice drinks and ready-to-drink teas and coffees. Through the world’s largest beverage distribution system, consumers in more than 200 countries enjoy the company’s beverages at a rate of 1.5 billion servings a day. With an enduring commitment to building sustainable communities, the company is focused on initiatives that protect the environment, conserve resources and enhance the economic development of the communities where they operate. For more information, please visit www.thecoca-colacompany.com.

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