

Duncan Campbell, *Friends of the Children* Founder
Wins \$50,000 Purpose Prize

Brainchild of Duncan Campbell connects long-term mentors with the city's neediest kids

New York City – October 26, 2009--Duncan Campbell, founder of *Friends of the Children*, has been awarded a 2009 Purpose Prize[®], which honors social entrepreneurs over 60 who are using their experience and passion to take on society's biggest challenges.

The Purpose Prize[®] recognizes 10 individuals a year, whose encore careers have focused on solving seemingly intractable problems facing our communities. There were over 1,000 nominations for this year's Purpose Prize[®] awards. The Purpose Prize[®] is funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies and the John Templeton Foundation.

“My own experience as the child with parents struggling with alcohol abuse, a father in and out of prison, living in a very distressed community, fueled my lifelong commitment to improving the lives of other neglected children,” explained Campbell. “I have the opportunity—and, I believe, the responsibility—to inspire others to make use of their own resources (whether time, talent or treasure) to help make real changes that will affect people's lives in a positive, meaningful way. “

After a thorough review of the science about what makes young people with daunting challenges succeed, Campbell launched *Friends of the Children* in Portland, Oregon in 1992. Research confirmed what Campbell already suspected---children develop resilience when they have a consistent caring adult in their lives. For some children who grow up like Duncan Campbell, that person is found outside their families.

Friends of the Children (Friends) now serves over 700 youth in Boston, Cincinnati, Klamath Falls (OR), New York City, Portland (OR), San Francisco and Seattle. In each of these seven cities, *Friends* takes children who are beginning to tumble through a cycle of poorly performing schools, decaying neighborhoods and complicated families and guides them to another track by pairing them with a caring, committed adult mentor, called a “Friend.” The Friend spends four hours a week with that child, every week, starting in kindergarten or first grade through high school. Each Friend is a salaried, full-time professional whose job it is to be the child's advocate, support their academic progress, and cultivate their gifts and talents.

“We need to move beyond short term fixes and realize that a long-term commitment to our most vulnerable children generates a significant future return on our investment,” remarked Campbell. “In today's troubled economic climate, we give our children something that does not decrease in value: unconditional love.”