



Building our future by supporting our youth

# Our Community's Children

June 2008

## *Mayor Heartwell Honored Afterschool*



The Afterschool Alliance honored Mayor George Heartwell for his support for afterschool programs at the "Breakfast of Champions," a gala event in Washington, D.C. on May 14, 2008. Mayor Heartwell was one of 17 individuals and four organizations honored as State Leader Champions for their tireless work on behalf of afterschool programs. Mayor Heartwell was nominated to receive this award by the Michigan After-School Partnership. Mayor George Heartwell has called for an afterschool program in every public school. He serves as Chair of the Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Network, a community collaborative of 100 partners facilitated by Our Community's Children, dedicated to ensure that every child has access to quality afterschool programs. The ELO Network recently received the prestigious Ready by 21 Quality Counts! grant from the Forum for Youth Investment to support quality improvement for afterschool programs in Grand Rapids. Over \$18 million in state and federal grants have been awarded over the past five years for local afterschool programs.

## *Youth Fair Showcases Afterschool*

On Saturday, May 17, 2008, hundreds of youth attended the Grand Rapids Public Schools' Collaborative Youth Fair at Ottawa Hills High School. Youth showcased their talents and projects they created while being part of The LOOP afterschool program this school year.



Free summer programs for youth through The LOOP run June through August. Call the GRPS' Office of Extended Learning at 616.819.2165 for more information.



Photo of the Month

# Introducing the Grand Rapids Youth Commission

Congratulations to the new Grand Rapids Youth Commission. These 25 outstanding 6th through 11th-grade students competed against 114 applicants to participate in an 18-month long project beginning this June. The Youth Commission will help develop and administer a needs assessment survey and youth profile for the Youth Master Plan, create an on-line interactive resource website for youth, and participate in job and leadership training.

## In Our Words



"Afterschool programs should be at all the schools because if you think about it, a lot of kids come to school to participate in those programs. They make good grades so that they can continue to participate in them. If you take them away, there's going to be a serious problem."

-Elliot Keyes,  
9th-grade  
GR Christian High  
Mayor's Youth Council



D'Asta



Isaac



Marco



Ashantia



Cheyenne



Kim-Ahn



Samantha



Celeste



Heather



Jonathan



Matt



Nick



Ramiro



Shamari



Shakeya



Chirsun



Mashara



Artasia



Kathryn



Marianna



Ashley



Danielle



Samantha



Savion



Sandra



Our Community's Children is a public/private partnership of the City of Grand Rapids, the Grand Rapids Public Schools, and the community.



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