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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

September 21, 2010

**Barnstable County Named One of Nation's  
*100 Best Communities for Young People***

America's Promise Alliance, the nation's largest partnership organization dedicated to youth and children, announced today that Barnstable County has been named a winner of the Alliance's *100 Best Communities for Young People* competition presented by the financial services company ING. The 2010 recognition marks the fourth win for Barnstable County, making it one of only two communities in the state to win the designation four times.

The *100 Best* designation recognizes those communities that make youth a priority by implementing programs that help keep children in school and prepare them for college and the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. In addition to enhancing local educational opportunities, most winning communities have taken steps to facilitate improved access to healthcare for its young people, encourage youth civic engagement, and supply developmental resources that create better places for young people to live and grow. The entire 2010 list of *100 Best Communities for Young People* and their accomplishments can be found at [www.americaspromise.org/100Best](http://www.americaspromise.org/100Best).

"Through its innovative and far-reaching programs, Barnstable County is taking bold and effective steps to help their young people graduate and lead healthy, productive lives," said Marguerite W. Kondracke, America's Promise Alliance president and CEO. "Barnstable County serves as an example to inspire and educate other communities across the nation to tackle the challenges facing their city and children, and to implement initiatives that give them the essential resources they need to succeed in life."

Barnstable County was named one of the nation's *100 Best* because of the valuable leadership opportunities the community provides to its young people, giving them a voice in matters significant to their lives. The Cape & Islands Youth Congress brings together a diverse group of high school students who lead the effort to bring about positive change in the community while preparing themselves and their peers for the challenges they face as young people. Many of the students involved in the Youth Congress take their leadership skills a step further by reviewing proposals and providing recommendations on which youth-focused programs should receive grants, and by issuing guidelines and working as a team to reach a decision.

The youth in Barnstable County showcase their leadership skills through another unique program known as Skill Share. During a Skill Share, young people from the community teach workshops to adults on topics such as cell phone use and establishing a Facebook page. In turn, community adults and the elderly advise youth on activities such as knitting or writing college essays.

“We are honored and excited to once again receive this designation,” said Kerry Bickford of Barnstable County 4-H/UMASS Extension and co-author of the application to America’s Promise. “The Barnstable County Council for Children, Youth, and Families has worked hard for the past four competitions to complete the application, but the true credit goes to all of those working in our community on behalf of children, youth, and families.”

Kristin O’Malley of the Cape Cod Foundation and co-author of the application, said the award indicates a commitment of community members to work together for the benefit of local youth. “The designation does not mean that our community is perfect or that we do not still have challenges we need to address,” she said. “However, it does mean that we have people from all different sectors of our community who are working together to foster a network of the best services and programs to support children and youth here on Cape Cod.”

Barnstable County and the other winners from 37 states were recognized today at a ceremony at the Washington Monument on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. In addition to the *100 Best* distinction, Barnstable County and the other top communities will receive two road signs identifying the city as one of *100 Best* and a trophy to be presented to local officials later this year.

Alliance Chair Alma Powell and President and CEO Marguerite W. Kondracke revealed the list of winners during the national celebration. They were joined by Rhonda Mims, president of the ING Foundation and senior vice president of ING’s Office of Corporate Responsibility and Multicultural Affairs, and *Twilight’s* Kellan Lutz.

**For more information about the Barnstable County Council for Children, Youth, and Families, email [bcccyf@gmail.com](mailto:bcccyf@gmail.com) or visit [www.bcccyf.org](http://www.bcccyf.org).**