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**Advisory For:**  
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## **Bank of America and Washington State Mentors collaborate in support of state's youth**

ISSAQUAH, Wash. -- Fourteen organizations across Washington have received grants totaling \$75,000 from Washington State Mentors (WSM) and the Bank of America Charitable Foundation.

The Bank of America Mentoring Initiative is funded by the Bank of America Charitable Foundation and administered by WSM. "This partnership is a wonderful example of what can be accomplished when corporations and non-profits join forces to support young people. These grants are awarded to outstanding mentoring organizations that are serving youth living in poverty all across Washington State," said Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen, who is co-chair of the Issaquah-based non-profit.

"These challenging economic times are particularly difficult on young people with limited financial and leadership resources," said Peter Joers, Washington president for Bank of America. "Through the Bank of America Charitable Foundation, we are pleased to be working with community partners like WSM, to make a meaningful impact on the future of Washington's youth through mentoring. We recognize that mentoring can have immediate and transformative effects on a young person's future, as well as the overall vitality of the communities in which they live, attend school and work."

"Through the Bank of America Mentoring Initiative we have directed more than \$300,000 in funding to 58 mentoring programs across Washington State since 2006. Over four years the Bank of America Mentoring Initiative's grantees have mentored more than 7,000 kids, many in small and rural communities where funding can be scarce" added Jim Marsh, president of Washington State Mentors.

Mentoring is a vital and effective means of helping young people overcome obstacles in their lives. Youth with mentors have fewer instances of violence and substance abuse, and increased emotional well-being and academic performance than youth who do not have mentors. Here in Washington, almost 200 organizations work with 30,000 youth in formal one to one or small group mentoring relationships.

Bank of America Mentoring Initiative grantees are selected through a competitive grant process. In order to apply for a Bank of America Mentoring Initiative grant, organizations have to meet a set of minimum quality assurance standards including background checks for all volunteer mentors, adherence to at least 70 percent of the Elements of Effective Practice for mentoring programs. Additionally, at least 51 percent of the youth served by the mentoring program must be from low- to moderate-income households.

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**2009 Grant Recipients Include:**

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Washington - \$6,700

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Washington - \$5,000

Boys & Girls Clubs of Benton and Franklin Counties Club Mentor - \$5,000

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Lewis Clark Valley Giant Killers - \$5,000

Communities In Schools of Lakewood - \$5,000

Communities In Schools of Renton - \$5,000

Gonzaga University's Center for Community Action & Service-Learning - \$5,000

Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration - Region Four - \$5,000

Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration - Region Six - \$5,000

North Kitsap School District - Poulsbo Middle School Peer Team Mentors - \$4,700

Western Washington University's Youth Outreach Initiative- \$6,600

Youth Eastside Services - \$5,000

Youthnet – Foster Care to College - \$7,000

YMCA of Yakima - ASPIRE - \$5,000

**About Washington State Mentors**

Washington State Mentors is an umbrella organization for the state's mentoring community, providing assistance with training, recruitment, resource development, data collection, public awareness and public policy. Washington State Mentors helps programs help kids. WSM is supported by Costco Wholesale, the state Department of Social and Health Services and many more organizations and individuals who believe in the power of mentoring. For more information on WSM, please visit [www.wamentors.org](http://www.wamentors.org)

**Bank of America Corporate Philanthropy**

Building on a long-standing tradition of investing in the communities it serves, Bank of America this year embarked on a new, ten-year goal to donate \$2 billion to nonprofit organizations engaged in improving the health and vitality of their neighborhoods. Funded by Bank of America, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation gave more than \$200 million in 2008, making the bank the most generous financial institution in the world and the second largest donor of all U.S. corporations in cash contributions. Bank of America approaches investing through a national strategy called "neighborhood excellence" under which it works with local leaders to identify and meet the most pressing needs of individual communities. Through Team Bank of America, bank associate volunteers contributed more than 900,000 hours in 2008 to enhance the quality of life in their communities nationwide. For more information about Bank of America Corporate Philanthropy, please visit [www.bankofamerica.com/foundation](http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation).

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