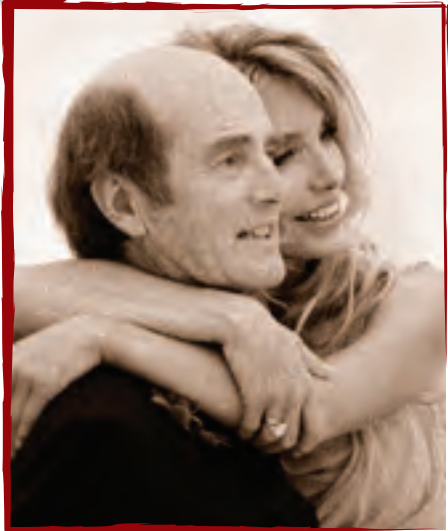




The Alliance for Children's Rights

Fall | 2010
Winter

Creating a Legacy



Dinner Chairs **Cliff Gilbert-Lurie and Sue Naegle** are joined by Honorary Co-Chairs **Harrison Ford, Jeffrey Katzenberg, Joe Roth, Judith and Bruce Stern and Thomas Tull** in recognizing Heather and Skip's impressive achievements and dedication to social change. Skip, a partner at Ziffren Brittenham LLP, is one of the leading entertainment lawyers in Los Angeles representing A-listers such as Harrison Ford, Eddie Murphy, Ridley and Tony Scott, DreamWorks, and Oprah among others.

"I am proud of my daughter, Kristina, and her commitment to social justice," says Skip. "She is using her skills and great talent to protect and defend the rights of helpless children."

Heather Thomas, stepmother to Skip's two daughters, Kristina and Shauna, and mother of their daughter, India, is a renowned writer, actress and activist. Well known for her role on ABC's 1980s hit *The Fall Guy*, Heather is a strong force in L.A.'s entertainment, media and philanthropic communities. She co-founded and hosts *L.A. Café* a progressive political salon and is a regular contributor to various publications such as the *Huffington Post*. Heather published her first novel, *Trophies*, last year.

The Alliance will present Skip Brittenham and Heather Thomas with the National Champions for Children Award at its Annual Dinner on **March 10, 2011**. A power couple who uses their intelligence, passion and connections to improve our community and our world, Heather and Skip have made a significant impact on environmental, healthcare, and women's and children's issues around the world.

"Heather and Skip's commitment to helping the underprivileged is unwavering," says co-chair Harrison Ford. "Their support of The Alliance is helping thousands of children and will make a tremendous impact on our community."

Skip has been named UCLA's *Alumnus of the Year* and is a recipient of The Spirit of America Award from the People for the American Way. He has served on numerous charities boards, including KCET, Conservation International, and The Alternative Medical AIDS Foundation. Skip's daughter, Kristina, has a long history with The Alliance as a law student, *pro bono* attorney and is currently on staff as Benefits attorney. Following in her father's footsteps, Kristina pursued a career in law, and has chosen a path where she can give a voice to those who have none.

Heather's true passion is social change. She works actively on many boards, including The Rape Treatment Center, NRDC, Amazon Conservation Team and Air America.

Through example, Skip and Heather have created a legacy of service, by placing a high value on community and demonstrating the importance of giving back.

For dinner info call (213) 368-6010 x115.

Linda Johnson Rice receives the Francis M. Wheat Award

The prestigious Francis M. Wheat Community Service Award goes to individuals who exemplify high levels of dedication and service to assist underserved and low-income individuals. Honoree Linda Johnson Rice, chairman of Johnson Publishing Company, Inc., home of *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines, was nominated for this award due to her strong belief in enhancing the future of today's youth by supporting several education initiatives and corporate internship programs. To date, *Ebony* Fashion Fair has raised more than \$55 million for various scholarship groups, allowing hundreds of young people the opportunity to further their education. *(continued on page 3)*





**Message from the CEO & Board Chair
Janis Spire and Steve Marenberg**

*“Be an opener of doors for such as come after thee.”
– American Poet, Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Igniting a passion for social justice and a tradition of philanthropy is a gift to the generations that follow us. Our Dinner Honorees have not only used their success to improve lives around the world, they have created in their own children a legacy of serving those who have no one in their corner.

This summer we had an outstanding class of interns, students from high school to law school, each carrying forth a legacy of giving and of change taught to them by their families and mentors. Our talented Alliance staff and dedicated *pro bono* attorneys and volunteers uphold our vision to eliminate the injustices children living in poverty and abuse face everyday, so they can attain necessities like safety, education and health care.

The youngest of those we serve are the infants and toddlers in our Early Start Program. While brain research confirms the extraordinary benefits of identifying and addressing a child’s needs early in development, over 40% of abused and neglected children (the population at highest risk for early delays) receive no therapeutic services. We give them access to services that remediate early delays and behavioral issues, often caused by trauma, so they have a chance to succeed at home and in school.

At the other end of the spectrum are youth aging out of foster care. As a co-sponsor of AB 12, California’s *Fostering Connections to Success Act*, we are encouraged by last month’s sweeping victory that passed this landmark bill into law (see article pg. 3). Giving youth a few more years to find solid footing and prepare for life on their own, brings hope to the bright, resilient young adults desperate to break the cycle of their past.

Right now the need is overwhelming. Please continue your support this holiday season and help us be a voice for the growing number of children and youth who count on us. Thank you and Happy Holidays.

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Alliance youth talk about AB12 on KPCC

89.3 KPCC | Southern California Public Radio

NEWS | PROGRAMS | BLOGS | EVENTS | ABOUT | SUPPORT US

Episode: *Half Marathon for September 24, 2010*

Fostering the most vital safety net: the problems, and potential fixes, of L.A.'s foster care system

Avery Bankston
20 years old
2 years in foster care

0:25 / 4:01

Governor signs bill to help foster youth

AB12 will greatly improve the quality of life for California's youth in foster care.

By Angie Schwartz, Esq., Policy Director

After much nail biting and nervous anticipation, the California Governor signed the landmark bill AB12 (*Beall & Bass*) *California Fostering Connections to Success Act* during the final hours of the legislative session. The bipartisan bill, cosponsored by The Alliance for Children's Rights, eases the often turbulent transition of youth aging out of foster care by extending foster care benefits support for eligible youth up to age 21.

To give more background, AB12 stems from the federal "Fostering Connections to Success Act," which was signed into law by President Bush in 2008 and allows states to use federal funds to provide support to the foster youth between the ages of 18 to 21.

Extending support to foster youth until age 21 also makes fiscal sense according to a 2009 study* that estimates supporting youth in foster care after 18 returns \$2.41 for every public dollar committed—impressive savings for the state.

AB12 being signed into law was a major victory for foster youth, children's advocates, and anyone who cares about the fate of foster youth. However, the hardest work on AB12 is still before us. Implementing AB12 in a way that ensures the additional three years of support provide youth with the tools and skills

to make a successful transition requires much more than a monthly check. It requires a cultural shift in the practice of child welfare, particularly because the system will now be serving youth who have the responsibilities and rights of a legal adult, but who also continue to need the care and support that any other 18 year old leaving home for the first time requires.

The Alliance will remain at the forefront of these implementation efforts, working in collaboration with critical stakeholders including the California Department of Social Services, the Los Angeles

Department of Children and Family Services, foster youth, and the other co-sponsors of AB12, to ensure the best outcomes for these youth.



California Governor signs landmark bill AB12

Youth who receive support after 18 are 200% more likely to stay in school, 300% more likely to go to college, and 65% less likely to be arrested than those who do not.* 2009 study, Professor Mark Courtney at the University of Washington.

Francis M. Wheat Honoree Linda Johnson Rice (continued from cover page)

We congratulate Ebony Magazine in celebrating its 65th year! Its first cover story carried a message of saving children and youth. In a recent interview with Good Morning America, Rice noted that saving our children and youth was an important issue then and continues to be an important issue now.

Rice serves on the boards of the United Negro College Fund, Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Omnicom Group, Inc., Magazine Publishers Association, Northwestern Memorial Corporation, as well as the Women's and Trustee boards of The Art Institute of Chicago, the University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication Board of Councilors, USC's Board of Trustees, the Founding Council of the National Museum of African-American History and Culture, and After School Matters. The Chicago Sun-Times named Rice among Chicago's 100 Most Powerful Women and The Top 10 Women In Media. She was also included in Crain's Chicago Business lists of 40 Under 40 and 100 Most Influential Women. She has one daughter, Alexa Christina Rice.

Latham & Watkins

Providing hours of leadership and commitment



Latham & Watkins pro bono team; Ghaith Mahmood, Timothy Lundgren, Maureen Falcone and Drew Levin with Alliance Pro Bono Manager Diego Cartagena pictured on far left.

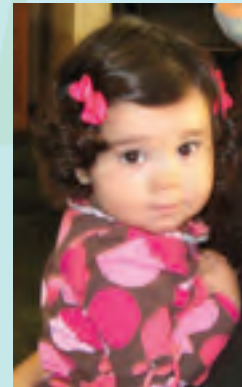
Pro bono partnerships make it possible for The Alliance to keep our budget down while serving nearly 7,000 of L.A.'s most vulnerable kids each year.

Latham & Watkins LLP, an outstanding *pro bono* partner not only helps us keep our doors open, but enables us to open new ones when we see a need. Over the past year Latham has donated over 4,000 *pro bono* hours across all of our program areas. Year after year we count on Latham to be at every adoption day, take on complex guardianship matters and step up for the families caught in the middle of the labyrinthine system of foster care benefits.

They didn't stop there. When we began a Special Education program to ensure foster children would receive much needed academic support services and had more cases than we could handle, Latham came to the rescue. Latham's leadership and commitment have added a level of depth to our *pro bono* program that now serves over 600 foster kids each year.

Two years ago, we launched an intensive focus on infants and young foster children ages 0-5 with developmental delays and behavioral issues. Staff attorney and former Skadden Fellow Sasha Stern is a devoted advocate for this population and inspired Latham to bring *pro bono* support to this critical area.

Latham recently represented a little girl, Angela, who was born prematurely with drugs in her system. At 2.5 years old, she had extremely limited motor and verbal skills – unable to hold a spoon to her mouth or say more than just a few one-syllable words. After being denied services through The Regional Center's Early Start Program, Latham attorneys **Drew Levin** and **Maureen Falcone** successfully advocated to get an array of services of high level therapy, amounting to four times what she was originally receiving. This kind of intervention at a young age, is already having an impact on her socially. Her foster family is noticing huge improvements, changing Angela's life for the better.



Willie Mae is a single woman living in Compton and raising her three grandchildren, two boys and one girl, all of whom have developmental delays (i.e. attention hyperactive disorders, and impulsive and destructive behavior), resulting from drug exposure and early neglect. Despite the intensive needs of the children, they were denied the correct amount of funding to support the high-level of care and specialized therapy they need. Willie Mae was doing everything she could to keep the family intact but was drowning in a sea of administrative paperwork, state agencies that ignored her requests, and bureaucratic circles that left her powerless and ill-equipped to properly care for the children.

Fortunately, Latham attorneys **Timothy Lundgren** and **Ghaith Mahmood** signed on for the case. After locating and combing through volumes of medical records, contacting former therapists, and reviewing the many case files going back nearly seven years, Timothy and Ghaith took the case to fair hearing where the judge ruled in favor of the children and awarded a large sum of back-funding and the appropriate amount to care for the special needs of the children in the future. Willie Mae is extremely grateful for the better life she will now be able to provide for her grandchildren. For info on *pro bono* opportunities contact d.cartagena@kids-alliance.org.

Path To Independence

by Dan Attanasio, Alliance Summer Intern



"My brother Hugo has overcome so much, and worked so hard for this moment." says younger sister Rebecca, "He is an inspiration to the rest of us."

"This past summer, I was fortunate enough to intern at The Alliance for Children's Rights, working mainly in the Communications Department. As an undergraduate from Brown University majoring in English, I was eager to use my writing experience to help The Alliance carry out its mission. Attending and writing about Hugo's graduation was one of the many rewarding, unforgettable experiences I had with The Alliance." -Dan Attanasio

As the ceremony commences, a short procession makes its way from the schoolhouse toward the stage. No one is more proud and more eager than the first student in line, Hugo Morales. For those in the crowd, it is clear that Hugo is first in line for a reason; he is graduating as class leader, the guy others look to when they are not quite sure how to respond to a new situation.

Hugo is all smiles and laughs as he's presented with the class leadership award at his high school graduation. He smiles because he knows that his simply being here at this moment is a major feat. Accepting a leadership award on top of that, is truly remarkable, although not miraculous, since he had had the proverbial "what it takes" all along.

Yet two years ago, if you told him he'd be decked out in black on this day, he likely would have thought he'd be in a very different place. After Hugo was removed from the care of his unstable parents, he began living with his aunt and uncle. Hugo, who suffered from emotional and behavioral issues stemming from a childhood of neglect, was eventually kicked out of his new home. He was then placed in a foster group home. With this move, he had to enroll in a new public school, and his academic and disciplinary struggles heightened significantly. He was also hanging out with the wrong crowd, subjected to negative peer pressure and bad influences.

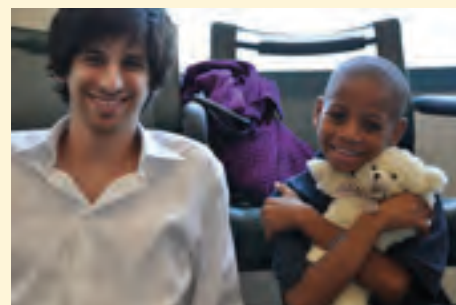
With help from Jill Rowland—The Alliance for Children's Rights Special Education Program Director—Hugo was relocated to a private special needs high school. At first he would interrupt his teachers and make fun of the mentally challenged students. But he was a smart, quick-minded kid, and, despite his struggles with schoolwork, showed much promise academically.

Over time, Hugo began to feel that the faculty at his school not only believed in him, but wished for him to play an important role in its community. Moreover, Hugo realized that he wanted to fulfill that role, and by doing so, could take a major step toward achieving his lifelong dreams. But Hugo had another realization: by taking on this role, he could not only improve himself, but also improve others. Hugo started dedicating himself to his academic work, and, by the end of his senior year, became an A and B student. Although his academic improvement was considerable, his teachers noted that his most important improvement was the change in the way he treated his classmates, especially the mentally challenged students. In fact, he became a kind of mentor to them, taking time during and after class to help them understand difficult concepts.

"I'm so proud of Hugo's progress these past two years." says Rowland, at his graduation ceremony, cheering louder than everyone. "Unfortunately, so many foster youth, like Hugo, get off track without an advocate and risk entering the school-to-prison pipeline rather than receiving the help they need. I am so grateful to have been there to help him reach his incredible potential."

Hugo is the first in their family to graduate high school, and this fall he started his first semester at college.

Calling all students!



College student Dan Attanasio at Adoption Day.

Consider an internship at The Alliance during the school year or a summer break. Please call Joelle (213) 368-6010, x115.

Summer Interns Help Serve Hundreds More Clients



Back Row: Ryma Samuels, Winston Gu, Patrice Wakeley, Ryan Guiboa, Michelle Mello, Megan Swezea, Mickey Donovan-Kaloust.
Front Row: Dan Attanasio, Fabricio Segovia, Jessica Acuna, Amy Powell, Andrea Reynoso, Sarah-Peaylman-Shapiro



3rd Annual Dinner With Friends Raises \$50K for Youth Aging Out

Even the wet and stormy weather didn't deter our guests from coming out for the 3rd annual Dinner with Friends event at the beautiful home of event chair **Abby Wolf-Weiss**, and husband **Daniel Weiss**.

The event was hosted by a dedicated committee of the **Friends of The Alliance** (pictured above). A special thank you to our emcee, **Willie Garson, Tia Carrere, Christopher Cross, Fred Willard and Jonathan Clark**, along with **Mayer Brown LLP, Rebecca Rotenberg, MD, Wasser, Cooperman & Carter** and all the **Friends Circle Sponsors!**



Thank you to our sponsors: Cedar House, Fresh Corn Grill, Gourmet Fetishes Catering, Pitfire Pizza, Mama's Hot Tamales, popchips, Larchmont Larder, The Coffee Bean, Made organic drinks, Cuvee on Robertson, Magnolia Bakery, Freshology, Susina Bakery & Café, and Hidden Gardens Floral.

ERNST & YOUNG

Adopt-A-Family for the Holidays

The Alliance corporate partner Ernst & Young is hosting an "Adopt-a-Family" holiday gift giving event on **Dec. 11 from Noon-2p.m.** "Helping kids in need during the holidays is a meaningful way for us to support our community and The Alliance," says E&Y partner and Alliance board member, Amy Hawkes, who created the program. *To sponsor a family, please contact: Joelle at (213) 368-6010 x115 or j.warren-lane@kids-alliance.org*

HONDA



MARATHON

PRESENTED BY K-SWISS

Going the Distance for Kids!

The 2011 Honda LA Marathon & 5K Run

As an official charity of the **2011 Honda LA Marathon** we invite you to join us in raising money for L.A.'s most vulnerable kids. To get involved in this exciting race, or for more information please go to our website **www.kids-alliance.org** or call (213) 368-6010 ext 115.

Do it for you! Do it for them!



Holiday shopping to benefit The Alliance



Holland & Knight

Women's Initiative, invites you to a special holiday networking and shopping event at **Sephora-Century**

City for hors d'oeuvres and cocktails, on Thursday, Dec. 9 at 6:00 to 8:30pm.

Twenty percent of the proceeds will benefit The Alliance for Children's Rights. *To R.S.V.P. contact j.warren-lane@kids-alliance.org.*



This year was all aces, raising thousands of dollars for children in need!!

It was the year of the women at the Bicycle® Playing Card's 7th Annual "All-In" for Kids Poker Tournament on Sunday, Oct. 17th at the Commerce Casino raising over \$65,000 for The Alliance!

Thank you to title sponsors **Bicycle® Playing Cards**, underwriter **City National Bank**, and sponsors Greenburg Glusker and the T-Shirt Pros! A big thanks to Co-Chair **Kathy Meherin**, along with Co-Chairs **Suzanne Todd** and

John Schulman and all of the committee who made the event a huge success.



Tony Dennison, City National's Martha Henderson, Kathy Meherin, and John Schulman.



City National's Martha Henderson, Camryn Manheim, and Suzanne Todd



Alliance CEO Janis Spire, Staff Attorney Sasha Stern with her mother Anna Marie holding the Dean Stern Award.

the 12th Annual



The David & Lynn Angell Memorial
Presented by the Angell Foundation and City National Bank

Mitch Kaplan and the Kaplan Stahler Agency does it again, underwriting and coordinating Tennis for Tots as we celebrated its twelfth run this year. Hosted at the newly renovated and historic Los Angeles Tennis Club, **the event raised over \$95,000!** A huge thank you to the Angell Foundation, City National Bank along with CBS, O'Melveny & Meyers and all the sponsors, players, donors and volunteers who made this fun day of tennis memorable! See you next year!



Elliot Stahler with fellow tennis player, Steve Peterman



Board member, Mitch Kaplan giving a winning trophy to Bart Williams the incoming Board Chair

HOLIDAY GIVING



Send your loved ones and colleagues a meaningful holiday gift while supporting the work of The Alliance through our Holiday Gift Card Program. **To order contact Joelle at 213-368-6010 x 115 or j.warren-lane@kids-alliance.org.**

Donate Your Car

Contact Donate for Charity and select The Alliance for Children's Rights to receive the proceeds - car can be in any condition, it's tax deductible and they take care of everything!

www.donateforcharity.com
or call (888) 392-4483



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protecting the future of all children

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2010 National Adoption Day

Celebrating a family for every child

National Adoption Day held on Nov. 20, 2010, is a collective national effort of more than 350 community events across the country – including all 50 states - to raise awareness of the



123,000 children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families and to celebrate the families who adopt.

National Adoption Day Sponsors

The Alliance for Children's Rights, Casey Family Services, Children's Action Network, Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, and Freddie Mac Foundation.

Visit www.nationaladoptionday.org

Holiday Wish List

Brighten an impoverished child's holiday season by purchasing:



Alliance Holiday Donation Cards



"Adopt-A-Family" Gift Baskets



Gift cards for our transitioning youth



Or, make a donation to The Alliance

Contact us for more info at
(213) 368-6010 x 115 or
visit www.kids-alliance.org