



# World of Children® Award

SETTING THE GOLD STANDARD IN CHILD ADVOCACY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## WORLD OF CHILDREN® AWARD ANNOUNCES 2014 HONOREES

*“Nobel Prize for Child Advocates” to Recognize Seven Heroes for Transforming the Lives of the World’s Most Vulnerable Children*

**NEW YORK – Sept. 16, 2014** – Seven heroes who have dramatically improved the lives of children around the world will be honored in New York City on November 6 by World of Children Award ([www.worldofchildren.org](http://www.worldofchildren.org)), the only global recognition and funding program that honors individuals serving vulnerable children worldwide.

Hailed by the media as the “Nobel Prize for Child Advocates,” this year’s selection of remarkable individuals have each created life-changing programs that benefit children in countries around the world dealing with issues from bullying to education to children at risk. The World of Children Award includes a cash grant of up to \$75,000.

“We are deeply inspired by our Honorees and the tangible contributions they have made to the children of the world”, said Harry Leibowitz, World of Children Award Co-Founder and Co-Chair. “We look forward to helping these every day heroes continue their missions. They are now forever a part of our World of Children Award family.”

World of Children Award uses a rigorous vetting process to identify the world’s most effective changemakers for children and provide funding for their efforts to improve young lives. The nonprofit’s exhaustive research and vetting of applicants for their Awards has been lauded by some of the world’s leading philanthropic organizations. They received around 1,000 Nominations from 108 countries around the world this year.

World of Children Award is led by co-founders Harry Leibowitz and Kay Isaacson-Leibowitz, retired senior executives from Procter & Gamble and Victoria’s Secret, who first started the organization to honor individuals serving children with a Nobel Prize-like award. Since 1998, World of Children Award has granted more than \$6 million in cash grants and program support to 100 Honorees who are the driving force behind programs serving children worldwide.

The 2014 World of Children Awards Ceremony will take place on Thursday, November 6<sup>th</sup> at 583 Park Avenue in New York City.



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## **Introducing the 2014 World of Children Award Honorees:**

### **2014 World of Children Health Award: Kenro Izu**

**Laos, Cambodia**

**Founder, Friends Without A Border**

[www.fwab.org](http://www.fwab.org)

Kenro Izu first encountered Cambodia's appalling lack of pediatric healthcare when he met children suffering from a variety of disabilities and illnesses during a photography trip in 1993. Determined to help, he realized that just sending in teams of medical personnel from time to time would not solve the fundamental issues. He undertook a campaign to build a pediatric teaching hospital with international standards, which opened its doors in 1999. Subsequently, satellite clinics were opened as a model of locally sustainable health care. Since then, Friends Without A Border (FWAB) has treated over 1.2 million children and provided advanced training to thousands of health workers. Today, construction is underway for a similar state-of-the-art pediatric teaching hospital in Laos, scheduled to open in early 2015. Funding from World of Children Award will help FWAB construct and equip this new hospital in Laos.

### **2014 World of Children Humanitarian Award: Gregory John Smith**

**Brazil**

**Founder, Rede Cultural Beija-Flor**

**Founder, Children At Risk Foundation**

[www.carf.no](http://www.carf.no)

In 1992, Gregory John Smith gave up his comfortable life in Norway to help street children in Brazil. He began living on the streets of São Paulo to see firsthand the desperate situations of the children who live there. After this experience, Gregory realized that rescue and rehabilitation, which is widely practiced, while necessary, does not deal with the core issue. Thus he created a totally unique program designed to prevent youngsters from becoming street children by giving them positive alternatives. Rede Cultural Beija-Flor not only enables street children to take control of their own lives, but prevents children from ending up on the street in the first place by helping them find a positive way to survive and thrive in the community. Funding from World of Children Award will provide life-changing scholarships for young people.

### **2014 World of Children Youth Award: Jaylen Arnold, Age 14**

**Florida**

**Founder and Creator, Jaylens Challenge**

[www.jaylenschallenge.org](http://www.jaylenschallenge.org)

Bullies don't like different. Jaylen Arnold found this out at a very early age. Jaylen Arnold is different. In his own words, "I am differently abled." So rather than fighting back physically, he decided to become the voice for millions of other children who have been bullied for being different. With the mantra "Bullying No Way!" anchoring his movement, Jaylen founded Jaylens Challenge Foundation, a program that has taught over 100,000 children how to recognize bullying and how to appreciate the differences in children. Using personal presentations and



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workshops, Jaylen and his supporters carry the “Bullying No Way!” message around the country. He plans to use funding from World of Children Award to expand his anti-bullying message to thousands more children across the United States.

## **2014 World of Children Youth Award: Mary Grace Henry, Age 17**

**Harrison, New York**

**Founder, Reverse The Course**

[www.reversethecourse.org](http://www.reversethecourse.org)

At the age of 12, Mary Grace Henry became determined to change the life of an underprivileged girl by funding her education. She started sewing headbands that she first sold at her school’s bookstore, using 100% of the profits to help girls living in extreme poverty attend school. Her program, Reverse The Course, has since grown into a successful social business model that is unique for a child of her age. To date, she has sold over 11,000 hair accessories and funded the education of girls in Kenya, Uganda, Paraguay and Haiti who, without her support, would not have been able to attend school. Funding from World of Children Award will support Reverse The Course’s mission to provide education for disenfranchised girls and to develop business training and mentoring programs for girls, empowering them to become positive agents of positive change in their societies.

## **2014 World of Children Alumni Award: Chaim Peri, Ed.D.**

**Haifa, Israel**

**Director Emeritus, Yemin Orde Youth Village**

**Founder and President, The Village Way Educational Initiatives**

[www.yeminorde.org](http://www.yeminorde.org)

Chaim Peri’s very name means “life” in Hebrew, and he has taken that connection to heart. For more than 30 years, Chaim has brought new meaning to the word “life” for thousands of youth around the world who were uprooted or from dysfunctional homes, giving them a long-term home base at Yemin Orde, the Orde Wingate Youth Village in Israel.

Chaim realized that the typical “orphanage” system creates a sense of fear and uncertainty in children because they know when they arrive that they will “age out” and have no place to go afterward. To combat this, Yemin Orde becomes the child’s home forever. They never really age out and there is always a place for them to come and live with their Yemin Orde family - for a few days, weeks or months. The day they arrive their fears are put to rest by touring the residential area of the grounds. “This is and will always be your home, whenever you want it,” they are told.

But there is so much more to Chaim’s dream of “The Village Way” that the model has now been replicated in 20 educational institutions around Israel, shared by all sectors of Israeli society - Jews and Arabs alike and in other countries including Rwanda after the horrible genocide there. Chaim maintains that only transformed educators have the ability to transform children. According to Chaim, the key to this transformation is in restructuring educational environments



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for at-risk youth by deinstitutionalizing their institutional characteristics. It is about carefully addressing the built-in failures of residential education for at-risk youth and providing solutions to overcome these setbacks.

In 1998, Chaim received one of the first World of Children Humanitarian Awards for his dedication to troubled youth at Yemin Orde.

## **2014 World of Children Lifetime Achievement Award: Marlo Thomas Memphis, Tennessee**

### **National Outreach Director, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital**

Marlo Thomas is an actress, author and activist whose body of work continues to impact American entertainment and culture. She has been honored with four Emmy Awards, the Peabody, a Golden Globe, a Grammy, and has been inducted into the Broadcasting Hall of Fame. She burst onto the scene in television's *That Girl*, conceiving, producing and starring in the first-ever series about an independent young career woman living on her own. Her pioneering spirit continued with the creation of the landmark children's project, *Free to Be... You and Me*, which became a platinum album, best-selling book and Emmy-winning TV special. She has remained a constant presence on television, in regional theatre and on Broadway, and on her website, [MarloThomas.com](http://MarloThomas.com), in partnership with AOL and The Huffington Post. She has written seven best-selling books, including her 2014 anthology, *It Ain't Over Till It's Over*, a collection of inspirational stories about women who reinvented themselves in remarkable ways. As National Outreach Director for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Marlo travels the country throughout the year, raising funds and awareness for the hospital. In 2004, she created the hospital's annual Thanks and Giving program, an unprecedented collaborative campaign that brings together more than 60 of the nation's leading corporations that has so far raised \$500 million dollars from holiday shoppers everywhere. Marlo lives in New York with her husband, talk show pioneer Phil Donahue.

## **2014 World of Children Board of Governors' Award: Jim Gold Dallas, Texas**

### **President and Chief Merchandising Officer, Neiman Marcus Vice Chair, World of Children Award**

Jim Gold is President and Chief Merchandising Officer for Neiman Marcus. For over a century, the company has been known for its dedication to customer service, style and luxury. A commitment to civic involvement and philanthropy are long-held corporate values, and Jim Gold's generosity of spirit exemplifies this philosophy.

Jim's vision, leadership, warmth, and integrity have helped to make him a beloved member of the international fashion community. He maintains a strong commitment to community service, and currently serves on the board of World of Children Award and the Dallas Museum of Art. He credits his professional success and philanthropic involvement to values instilled in him by his



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parents, who made sure that, in addition to work, his priorities remained his family and making the world a better place for those less fortunate. Jim has been involved with World of Children Award since 2007 and has been a passionate advocate for the organization's mission of improving the lives of vulnerable children.

Jim was educated at Tulane University, where he earned a B.A. degree in English Literature. He also holds an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School. Jim and his wife Beth are the proud parents of Caroline and Matthew.

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## **ABOUT WORLD OF CHILDREN AWARD**

World of Children Award improves the lives of vulnerable children by funding and elevating the most effective changemakers for children worldwide.

Since 1998, World of Children Award has granted more than \$6 million in cash grants and program support to 100 humanitarian leaders who are the driving force behind programs serving children worldwide. The organization's exhaustive research and vetting of individuals has been hailed by leading philanthropic organizations. The media often refers to World of Children Award as the Nobel Prize for child advocacy.

World of Children Award has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Huffington Post*, *People*, *Town & Country*, and *Harper's Bazaar*. World of Children Award Honorees have also been featured by *The New York Times*, *CNN*, *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, *Fast Company Magazine*, *People*, *Glamour*, *TEEN Vogue*, *TIME for Kids*, *USA Today* and the *Christian Science Monitor*, among several other national and international media.

Most recently, *The Huffington Post* named World of Children Award's Co-Founders, Harry Leibowitz and Kay Isaacson-Leibowitz, one of the United States' most inspiring "power couples" for their lifetime commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable children around the world.

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