

FRIENDS of the CHILDREN

Seattle

Media Contact:

Latima Charbonneau

206-240-5919

latima@friendsseattle.org

Peter Yu

925-663-9476

peter.yu@zeacon.com



FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN –SEATTLE CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY WITH VIRTUAL GALA TO BENEFIT YOUTH MENTORING

Seattle, August 25, 2020 – For Immediate release:

In response to concerns about COVID-19, [Friends of the Children–Seattle](#) (Friends–Seattle), a national organization that pairs youth with a paid, professional mentor for 12 + years, will celebrate its 20th Anniversary Fundraiser virtually. On Saturday, October 3, 2020, they will have a Livestreamed Gala "Inspiring Greatness, No Matter What" that is open to all.

"Inspiring Greatness is more than a fundraising event. It is a time to celebrate and honor the youth in our program, to celebrate the youths' successes and to remember how critical our work is," said Kameo Simpson, Board Member and Host Committee Chair for Inspiring Greatness.

Over the past 20 years, professional mentors at Friends–Seattle have gone the extra mile to show up for their youth, especially during hard times. And right now, during this pandemic, things are hard. One of our program youth, Ariana*, is going between multiple family members' houses as her family figures out childcare. Consistency and connection have never been more critical for her.

Ariana's mentor delivers food bags to her house weekly, connects her dad to internet resources and connects with Ariana at least once a week. After Ariana and her mentor got off their call one particular week, she sent her mentor a message with that said, "I know we just talked, but I miss you....and yeah I just miss you...and I miss you...and one more thing...wait a minute. Yeah...I miss you." Even virtually, Ariana's relationship with her mentor provides her the consistency and connection that are essential to her growth.

Anyone interested in receiving more information on how to be a sponsor, party host, or have questions, can contact Elena@friendsseattle.org. We are also thrilled to partner with Jones BBQ and JuneBaby, two Seattle-area Black-owned restaurants, to make this year's Inspiring Greatness even more memorable. Over the past 5 years, Jones BBQ has provided the food for many Friends-Seattle family engagement events. Moreover, this year's fundraiser will be livestreamed thanks to our collaboration with a local startup, Zeacon, whose mission is to intelligently connect communities. For more info and to register, visit friendsseattle.org.

"This year, we have experienced crisis upon crisis that has stretched us to rise to the challenge of what it really means to be a no-matter-what organization," said Steve Lewis, Friends of the Children Seattle's Executive Director. "This event will showcase our youth's accomplishments—the perseverance, diligence, and creativity they have shown this year."

About Friends of the Children

Founded in 1993, Friends of the Children began in Portland, Oregon. Friends of the Children is a national nonprofit with the mission of impacting generational change by empowering youth who are facing the greatest obstacles through relationships with professional mentors – 12+ years, no matter what. Our successful model is now in 22 locations. For more information visit friendsseattle.org.

About Zeacon

Zeacon (zeacon.com) is a technology startup that is re-imagining the future by seamlessly integrating the best of the physical and virtual worlds. We offer a variety of technologies as well as e-commerce-based products, services, and online live streaming experiences. Zeacon works with organizations to drive digital transformation during challenging times and provide immersive and personalized experiences that intelligently connect communities.