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**GLOBAL CHANGEMAKERS FOR CHILDREN HONORED  
BY WORLD OF CHILDREN**

*World of Children Awards to Recognize Six Individuals for Their Extraordinary Efforts to Improve Children's Lives*  
**NEW YORK, NY – October 9, 2009** – Six changemakers who have dramatically improved children's lives will be showcased on November 5 by [World of Children](http://www.worldofchildren.org) ([www.worldofchildren.org](http://www.worldofchildren.org)), the only global recognition and funding non-profit that recognizes individuals who are changing the lives of children around the world.

The extraordinary individuals who have pioneered life-changing programs to benefit children each will be honored with the award that's been recently hailed in the press as the "Nobel Prize® for Children," an annual honor that includes a cash grant of up to \$50,000 for the honoree's program. The 2009 World of Children Award winners will be honored at the 12<sup>th</sup> annual World of Children Awards ceremony on Thursday, November 5, at UNICEF House in New York City.

"The world needs changemakers for children now more than ever, and World of Children is deeply honored to support these extraordinary individuals in their important efforts to improve children's lives," said Harry Leibowitz, World of Children's founder and chairman.

For more than a decade, World of Children has identified and vetted some of the most promising changemakers for children worldwide and provided funding for their efforts to improve children's lives. The organization's exhaustive research and vetting of individuals spearheading health and humanitarian initiatives across the global spectrum has been hailed by leading philanthropic organizations.

World of Children is led by co-founders Harry Leibowitz and Kay Isaacson-Leibowitz, retired senior executives from Procter & Gamble and Victoria's Secret, whose dream is to bestow a Nobel Prize®-like award to honor social changemakers who improve children's lives. Since 1998, World of Children has awarded more than \$2 million in cash grants to 84 changemakers working in more than 50 countries.

The 2009 World of Children honorees are:

**2009 Health Award: Douglas Maclagan, Child Welfare Scheme (Nepal)**

At age 28, a distraught mother desperate for help handed Douglas Maclagan her dying baby girl. Overcome and inspired, Douglas committed himself completely and selflessly to the children of Nepal. Together with villagers he recruited to help, Douglas set up his first two Day Care Health Centers in 1995 and saw an immediate drop in the infant mortality rate in the region. His program provides education, healthcare and social opportunities for disadvantaged children in spite of the deep political instability and local corruption. Douglas has actively sheltered children from police beatings, insurgent raids, and recruitment from the Nepalese brothels. He now lives very simply with his family and oversees the organization, which serves more than 40,000 children in need each year. He established [Child Welfare Scheme/Nepal](#) in 1997 and now runs highly sustainable programs with 190 physicians, nurses, social workers, educators and support staff. The future promises more vital services to thousands of disadvantaged children through fourteen new local partners, including the Nepalese government which now recognizes Children Welfare Scheme's achievements.

**2009 Humanitarian Award: Sam Kateu, Kavule Parents School for the Deaf (Uganda)**

Sam Kateu believes that deaf children in Uganda will certainly face a life without hope if they are not educated and able to read and communicate. With unending determination, Sam established a school to ensure that deaf children have the full role in society they deserve. The program that started in his home with 8 deaf children in Uganda in 1998 has now developed into the [Kavule Parents School for the Deaf](#) boarding school, which houses and educates 60 deaf children annually. The school reduces illiteracy among deaf children and empowers them economically, even as they struggle with harsh daily circumstances. Despite the profound difficulties inherent in organizing a sustainable boarding school in rural Uganda, Sam provides quality education, safe living conditions, adequate nourishment and medical care to children from desperately poor circumstances. Rather than retiring from life after a serious accident in which he lost his leg 20 years ago, Sam dedicated his life to having a profound and positive effect on children in need.

**2009 Founder's Youth Award: Jessica Rose Markowitz, Richard's Rwanda (Seattle, WA)**

Only 14 years old, Jessica Markowitz has already traveled to Rwanda three times and has been deeply affected by the tales of genocide she has heard from children in the community. Jessica takes very seriously the need to give back and has spent countless hours working to establish her organization [Richard's Rwanda](#) to ensure Rwandan girls receive the education they deserve. Her trips have allowed her to get to know the girls better and assess their needs. She recently designed a tool kit for girls who are interested in starting their own chapter of Richard's Rwanda in their own communities, and there are now chapters launching in Rwanda, as well as in Baltimore, Washington, D.C. and Jessica's hometown of Seattle, Washington. Jessica's leadership is empowering other students to take on key roles in supporting and growing Richard's Rwanda, while also allowing her to grow and serve as a kind and passionate role model. World of Children funds will be designated to establish a *World of Children Library*, so the Rwandan girls they support today can be served for generations to come.

**2009 Founder's Youth Award: Ashlee Smith, Ashlee's Toy Closet (Reno, NV)**

Ashlee learned firsthand how hard it is to be a child who loses everything when she lost her family home to a fire when she was just six years old. After her firefighter father battled a Lake Tahoe fire that destroyed more than two hundred homes, Ashlee decided to take action and create [Ashlee's Toy Closet](#). At just eight years old she established the nonprofit organization, which now collects, distributes and donates toys all over the country to children affected by natural disasters, fires, floods or harsh economic conditions. Ashlee is highly motivated to attract and distribute donations, and actively partners with local fire departments, police, and ambulances to supply them with stuffed animals for scared or injured children. She donates stuffed animals to the local Special Kids Rodeo for physically and mentally challenged children, provides local foster families with toys in her Reno, Nevada community, and "adopts" hundreds of children and families during Christmas time. Ashlee is now ten years old and has sent toys to thousands of children all over the country. Today she is becoming a well known young leader for actively engaging in what she calls "turning kids' frowns upside down!"

**2009 Lifetime Achievement Award – Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn**

World of Children's Board of Governors will also bestow a non-monetary Lifetime Achievement Award to the Pulitzer Prize-winning team of Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, who have dedicated their lives to elevating the issue of violence against children and families to national and international prominence. They have recently co-authored a book about social changemaking entitled, [Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide](#).

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**ABOUT WORLD OF CHILDREN**

[World of Children](http://www.worldofchildren.org) ([www.worldofchildren.org](http://www.worldofchildren.org)) is the only global recognition and funding program for people specifically and exclusively serving the needs of children. Now a 12-year-old philanthropy dedicated to identifying and leveraging the efforts of those working on the ground to improve children's lives, World of Children has recognized some of the most promising changemakers for children worldwide and provided funding and visibility for their efforts.

Hailed recently by the media as the "Nobel Prize® for Children," the [World of Children Awards](#) program searches the globe for everyday changemakers and provides funding and recognition to support their life-changing work for children. As such, World of Children acts like a social venture capitalist – employing a world-class research, review, vetting and selection process led by a committee of independent experts and professionals to find those individuals who are pioneering life-changing programs to benefit children. Then World of Children invests, through cash grants, in those enterprising individuals with a demonstrated track record of success, honors them at an annual awards ceremony in New York City and helps them leverage their World of Children awards to raise additional funds and generate visibility and strategic partnerships for their programs.

Leading philanthropies praise this organization's extensive worldwide research and vetting of extraordinary individuals who are spearheading health and humanitarian programs. World of Children has awarded more than \$2 million in cash grants to 84 changemakers for children working in over 50 countries.

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