



For Immediate Release
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Local Youth-Focused Organizations Team Up with CSI: NY's Hill Harper for Youth Summit

WILMINGTON- Delaware Prevention Network Alliance (DPNA) in collaboration with the Office of Prevention and Early Intervention (OPEI) and Duffy's Hope, Inc., is hosting the "Realize the Real Prize Youth Summit" on Saturday, August 2, 2008, at the Doubletree Hotel on King Street in Wilmington. This event, largely organized by Delaware youth, focuses on topics such as preventing gang violence, prescription drug abuse, safe sex practices, media messaging, and the importance of education.

CSI: NY actor and *New York Times* best-selling author, Hill Harper will deliver the keynote address. His books, "Letters to a Young Brother: MANifest Your Destiny" and "Letters to a Young Sister: deFINE Your Destiny," focus on improving the self-esteem and strengthening the self-reliance of young adults and teenagers.

"This is the type of event that the youth need—an event that was created and developed, in part, by their peers," said Henry Smith, cabinet secretary of the Delaware Children's Department. "It makes the information more credible and easier to retain when it's given to youth by those they would consider their friends. I'm also extremely pleased to be working with organizations such as the DPNA and Duffy's Hope, Inc., who join us in our continued mission to *Think of the Child First*."

The summit will begin with lunch at 11:00 a.m., followed by Harper's keynote address. Youth will lead and facilitate two workshops: "From Fallin' to Ballin'" and "The Real Prize." The summit will conclude with a celebrity panel discussion featuring Meagan Good from "Love Guru," Clifton Powell from "Norbit," and Wesley Jonathan from "Roll Bounce," as well as appearances by Delaware's Twin Poets and Pastor Derrick Johnson.

"It's exciting when youth and celebrities work together to counter negative media messages," said Paul Calistro, executive director of West End Neighborhood House, a DPNA member-agency. "I'm encouraged when youth organize to convey positive messages to their peers," he added.

Hill Harper will also be conducting a public book-signing at Borders Books on Route 202 at 1:00 p.m.

Delaware Prevention Network Alliance is funded by The Office of Prevention and Early Intervention. OPEI serves the first step in the fight to help at-risk children, working with children, youth, families, schools and the community to prevent and/or recognize signs of child abuse, dependency, neglect, juvenile delinquency, mental health disorders and substance abuse.

Our Mission: The Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families provides leadership and advocacy for all of Delaware's children, while endorsing a holistic approach to enable children to reach their fullest potential.

For more information, please visit <http://www.kids.delaware.gov> or www.ThinkOfTheChildFirst.com.

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