

# MENTOR MINUTE

*One Page, One Minute on Mentoring*

Cathy Jenkins  
703-224-2230

## **New Report from America's Promise Alliance Supports Need for More Mentors**

May 5, 2009: Only 53 percent of U.S. students in the country's 50 largest cities graduate from high school on time, according to a new report from America's Promise Alliance.

Prepared by the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center and titled *Cities in Crisis 2009: Closing the Graduation Gap*, the report also revealed that a number of large cities, such as Philadelphia, Tucson, Kansas City, El Paso, Portland and New York, increased graduation rates between 1995 and 2005. Still, among the top 50 cities, the combined rate is well below the national average of 71 percent.

"This excellent report from America's Promise Alliance serves as yet another point of advocacy for mentoring," said MENTOR's Chief Executive Officer Dan Schneider. "We know through numerous studies that high-quality mentoring lowers dropout rates. It is simply a fact, and with 15 million American children needing and wanting mentors, we continue to push for mentoring programs, funding and involvement to help our young people graduate from high school and succeed in life."

Alma Powell, chair of America's Promise Alliance, said, "The 10-year graduation rates show that progress is being made in some of America's largest cities, but significant work remains. In order to continue to move forward and make the U.S. competitive in today's global economy, we must work together like never before to provide the supports that young people need in order to graduate high school ready for college, work, and life."

Additional information in the report includes city-by-city graduation statistics; the economic and employment picture for students with varying educational levels, as well as their earning potential; the effect high school dropouts have on the nation as a whole; and the impact of America's Promise Alliance Dropout Prevention campaign to date.

*Cities in Crisis 2009* was funded in part by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and sources include school district data from the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data (2004-05). The country's 50 largest cities were identified using 2006 data from the U.S. Census Bureau, and economic and employment conditions were gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2007 American Community Survey. For more information, visit [www.americaspromise.org](http://www.americaspromise.org) and [www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org).