

Action for Children



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Advisory

What: Small Steps Big Benefits, Action for Children’s annual fundraiser, took the form of a Celebrity Spelling Bee on October 27th to raise vital funds and awareness for the organization’s mission to transform the lives of children by supporting, empowering and advocating for the adults who make the biggest impact on their lives—their parents, caregivers and teachers. Spellers competed on behalf of early learning and enrichment programs throughout central Ohio. South Side Learning and Development Center (SSLDC) at the Reeb Avenue Center took home the grand prize thanks to the first-ever Spelling Bee Champ, Jane Grote Abell, Chairwoman of Donatos and AFC Board Member. Roberta Bishop, SSLDC Director, was also awarded with the 2016 Diane S. Bennett and Daniel H. Schoedinger Award for Community Service in Support of Early Childhood. The event also included a special performance by the students of the Harmony Project. With the support of corporate sponsors, donors and almost 400 attendees, AFC raised nearly \$100,000 and has started making plans for next year’s event on October 26th, 2017.

Who: Celebrity Spellers:

- Jane Grote Abell, Chairwoman, Donatos
- David Brown, Founder/Creative Director, Harmony Project
- Joe DeLoss, Owner/Head Fryer, Hot Chicken Takeover
- J. Daniel Good, Superintendent/CEO, Columbus City Schools
- Representative Cheryl Grossman, Ohio House of Representatives
- Melissa Ingwersen, President, KeyBank Central Ohio
- Tanisha Robinson, Founder, Print Syndicate & Ticketfire
- Katie Smith, Associate Head Coach, New York Liberty
- Shaun Young, Founder, Ardina & Millenefits

Judges:

- Elizabeth Brown, Columbus City Council
- Tom Krouse, CEO, Donatos
- Rob Podlogar, National Director, Seimer Institute

Pronouncer:

Action for Children



- Ann Fisher, Host/Producer, All Sides with Ann Fisher, WOSU

Emcees:

- Shawn Ireland, Host, Good Day Columbus, Fox28/ABC6
- Marshall McPeck, Host, Good Day Columbus, Fox28/ABC6

Sponsors:

- *Champion Sponsor:* Cardinal Health
- *Participant Sponsors:* American Electric Power; Crane Group; Donatos; Key Private Bank; PNC
- *Patron Sponsors:* BDO; Highlights; Huntington Bank; Nationwide Insurance; Porter Wright; Profit Words, Teaching Strategies; UBS Financial Services, Cullman/Holt Group; White Castle
- *Supporters:* BKG Services, Inc.; COTA; Darlene M. Davis, CPA; Excel Management Systems; Mollard Consulting; Nationwide Children's Hospital; Rinkov Family; Wayne Robinson; Diana Westhoff
- *Community Partners:* Columbus City Schools; Furniture Bank; Homeless Families Foundation; Homeport; Seimer Institute; Women's Fund of Central Ohio; YMCA of Central Ohio
- *Hospitality Partners:* Bosc & Brie; Brownie Points; Powell Village Winery; Zaftig Brewing Company
- *Official Spelling List Provided By:* Zaner-Bloser

About Action for Children

Founded in 1972, Action for Children's (AFC) mission is to transform the lives of children in Central Ohio by supporting, empowering and advocating for the adults who make the biggest impact on children's lives - their parents, caregivers, and teachers. Through innovative and comprehensive programs, AFC reaches more than 9,000 early childhood educators and 50,000 children and their families each year in central Ohio. For more information, please visit www.actionforchildren.org or call 614-224-0222.