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Fourth Annual Literacy Heroes Breakfast Recognizes Hometown Heroes
Local Celebrities and Community Members Gather to Honor Literacy Champions

April 17, 2009: Chadds Ford, PA. For the fourth consecutive year, West Chester Public Library and Verizon partnered with more than a dozen other prestigious corporate sponsors to host the ***Fourth Annual Literacy Heroes Breakfast***. This year, nearly 100 nominations were submitted in response to a community-wide *Call for Nominations* that aimed to recognize literacy heroes throughout Chester County. Event sponsors had the difficult task of reviewing nominations and selecting just one winner in each of the eight hero categories.

Names of the 2009 winners were announced during the motivational awards breakfast at Longwood Gardens on Friday, April 17. Award winners included:

- ✓ **Adult Literacy Heroes – Melissa and Kwesi Koomson (co-nominated)**
- ✓ **Community Impact – Leon Thomas**
- ✓ **Corporate Good Neighbor Hero – Bentley Systems, Inc.**
- ✓ **Education Hero – Lorraine Andersen**
- ✓ **Local Author Hero – Lisa Scottoline**
- ✓ **Medical/Health Literacy Hero – Dr. Jaclyn Gleber**
- ✓ **Technology/Innovation Hero – AWE**
- ✓ **Youth Literacy Heroes – Kathryn and Elizabeth Metzker (co-nominated)**

Complete bios and photos for each winner can be found online at www.literacyheroes.com.

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WCPL Board President Howard Sundwall stated, “Because of these heroes, a child has learned to read and learned to love to read. Books and educational materials were sponsored for schools in Chester County. Spanish-speaking immigrants learned to speak English for the first time. Course materials – and inspiration – were provided to students in a disadvantaged country half a world away.”

The breakfast, which was held in the beautiful ballroom at Longwood Gardens, filled the venue to capacity once again as a standing-room-only audience of 230 guests gathered. Guests were inspired not only by the stories of the literacy heroes themselves, but also by comments shared by the event’s Guest Speaker, Dick Vermeil, Football Legend and former NFL Coach; Honorary Chairman of the event, Governor Edward G. Rendell, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and event emcee, Tamala Edwards, morning news anchor of 6abc Action News.

Gale Given, President of Verizon – PA, commented, “In the hectic pace of today’s world, it is exciting to begin the day surrounded by so many wonderful people – our honorees – our literacy champions! We applaud their leadership, dedication and passion to help unlock the promise of literacy for other in need in the community. I’d also like to thank West Chester Public Library for offering us the opportunity to, once again, serve as the Title Sponsor and helping to enhance the Library’s programs and services for the West Chester community.”

Governor Edward G. Rendell, honorary chairman of the event, echoed the importance of literacy heroes by stating, “Congratulations to everyone being honored today, and best wishes to you for your continued success as you use innovation and insight to make great strides in the coming year. I also extend my support and encouragement to everyone involved with the West Chester Public Library as you pursue your vision for literacy in Chester County and throughout our commonwealth.”

The celebratory breakfast was filled with emotional moments as guests had an opportunity to learn about each of the eight winners through professionally-produced video vignettes that were prepared compliments of Comcast.

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A number of corporations rallied around the event and served as event sponsors. West Chester Public Library and Verizon served as title sponsors for the event. Other supporters included 123 Awards.com, 6abc Action News; Barnes and Noble, CCIU, Citadel, Comcast, CTDI, Endo Pharmaceuticals, Exelon, First National Bank of Chester County, Longwood Gardens, Otto's BMW, Passion for Petals, Proflowers.com, QVC, Reinos Design Print Mail, Ryan Estes Photography, Striking Changes, LLC, Successful Outcomes, The Chester County Hospital, The Daily Local News, The Hankin Group, Verizon, West Chester LLC, West Chester University.

When recapping the affair, library Board President Howard Sundwall stated, "All in all, it was another incredible morning. I'm thrilled that this is the fourth year that the awards have been given. In my seven years on the library board I have seen these awards grow from an idea to a tradition – from a small gesture of thanks to a glittering morning affair where all of us can applaud and recognize what is best about our community. Congratulations to this year's winners and all of our nominees –we'll see you next year!"

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