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of Central Ohio

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## **News Release**

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### **Dr. Kelly Kelleher Named 2014 Champion of Children**

### **City Year Columbus Named**

### **2014 Champion of Children Nonprofit Organization**

*Kelleher and City Year Columbus will be honored at the 21<sup>th</sup> Annual Champion of Children Signature Event featuring author Paul Tough to be held on February 11, 2014 at The Southern Theatre*

Columbus, Ohio (November 15, 2013) –Kelly Kelleher, MD of Nationwide Children’s Hospital has been named the 2014 Champion of Children. Kelleher joins a group of dynamic local leaders who have been recognized as Champions of Children and have worked to create a better tomorrow for all of the children in central Ohio.

“Over his distinguished career Kelly has been a great leader in childhood initiatives. He is a true champion for the cause of children's health” said Elfi Di Bella, President and CEO of YWCA Columbus, and Chair of the Champion of Children Selection Committee. “Kelly has paved the way for new standards and health initiatives for children, particularly high-risk children, and he understands that this not only improves individual lives, but strengthens our entire community.”

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Dr. Kelleher is Vice President of Community Health and Services Research at Nationwide Children's Hospital, and Center Director in the Center for Innovation in Pediatric Practice at The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital. He is also Professor of Pediatrics and Public Health in the Colleges of Medicine and Public Health at The Ohio State University. He is a pediatrician and health services researcher focused on improving and measuring the quality of pediatric care for high risk children affected by social determinants of health, violence, neglect, alcohol, drug use or mental disorders. He is also Principal Investigator on the Healthcare Innovation Award from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services which is helping improve the health of more than 300,000 children in Central and Southeastern Ohio.

City Year Columbus was selected as the Champion of Children Nonprofit Organization for the remarkable results it has achieved with its dynamic approach to improving the lives of children and youth.

City Year Columbus is an education-focused nonprofit organization that was founded on the principles of service and leadership. Since 1994, City Year Columbus has served more than one million hours, impacted more than 75,000 children and youth, engaged over 10,000 community volunteers contributing more than 75,000 hours of service and graduated more than 600 corps members. City Year partners with Columbus City Schools to promote reading proficiency and citizenship, helping increase attendance and graduation rates in many urban schools. One example of their success is seen in Weinland Park, where 91% of students tutored by City Year improved their Reading Comprehension Assessment by one letter grade or more.

"City year is a great example of collaboration and results. They partner with many nonprofit organizations in addition to Columbus City Schools to deepen relationships and strengthen student achievement and engagement," said Di Bella. "The mentoring provided by their corps members is helping transform educational outcomes for students in disadvantaged neighborhoods and we are fortunate to have such an energetic and effective organization in central Ohio."

Kelly Kelleher and City Year Columbus will be honored at the 21st Annual Champion of Children Signature Event to be held at 6:00 p.m. on February 11, 2014 at The Southern Theatre. The event, which will be taped for later broadcast on WOSU, will include an award ceremony and a one-on-one conversation between former WOSU "Open Line" host Fred Andrie and Paul Tough, author of *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity and the Hidden Power of Character*.

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The Signature Event will focus on the parent engagement efforts currently taking place in central Ohio and how these efforts affect academic achievement. Tough's book highlights the need to help students develop key character qualities that will help them succeed in school, graduate from high school, and progress to higher education and careers. **To learn more about Champion of Children and, please visit to [www.liveunitedcentralohio.org/champion-of-children](http://www.liveunitedcentralohio.org/champion-of-children).**

Previous Champions include:

Champion of Children Nonprofit Organization

- 2013 - Big Brothers Big Sisters
- 2012 - Action for Children
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Champions of Children

- 2013 - Jed Morison, Superintendent/'CEO of Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities
- 2012 - Patrick Losinski, Executive Director of the Columbus Metropolitan Library
- 2011 - John E. Bickley, former President and CEO, YMCA of Central Ohio
- 2010 - E. Gordon Gee, President of The Ohio State University
- 2009 - Ann Pizzuti, community volunteer and former chair of United Way of Central Ohio
- 2008 - Dr. David Andrews, former Dean, College of Education and Human Ecology, The Ohio State University
- 2007 - Bill Dolan, former Chief Executive Officer of Children's Hunger Alliance
- 2006 - Dr. Gary Smith, Director, Center for Injury Research and Policy, Children's Hospital
- 2005 - Dr. Gene Harris, Superintendent, Columbus City Schools
- 2004 - Thekla Shackelford, founding member and chairman, I KNOW I CAN
- 2003 - Tanny Crane, CEO and president, Crane Plastics Co. and community volunteer
- 2002 - Catherine Willis, community activist and a founder of Friends of Art for Community Enrichment (FACE)
- 2001 - David Schirner, vice president and camp director, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Ohio
- 2000 - Yvette McGee Brown, Ohio Supreme Court Justice, former Franklin County lead juvenile judge, and former president of the Center for Child and Family Advocacy, Children's Hospital
- 1999 - Sara Neikirk, executive director, Communities in Schools (retired)
- 1998 - Mark Real, founder and former director of Children's Defense Fund – Ohio, now president and CEO of KidsOhio.org
- 1997 - Dr. Antoinette Parisi Eaton, noted pediatrician and Corporate Director of Governmental Affairs for Nationwide Children's Hospital
- 1996 - Mary Lazarus, community volunteer, child advocate and policy advisor
- 1995 - Cecilia Cullman, co-founder of Action for Children
- 1994 - Dr. Leslie Bostic, founding director of the Buckeye Ranch

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## **About Champion of Children**

Champion of Children is an education initiative focused on supporting United Way of Central Ohio's community results:

- Children will enter kindergarten physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively ready to succeed.
- Youth graduate from high school well-prepared for additional learning and productive careers.

Founded in 1994 by Linda Kass and community stakeholders, Champion of Children has been a leading voice of advocacy for quality education for children in central Ohio. In 2010, Champion of Children joined forces with United Way of Central Ohio to address the educational needs of all children, from birth through graduation. By providing a platform for new ideas, effective approaches, collaboration and, most importantly, for action, Champion of Children motivates and aligns efforts to improve education in our community.

Champion of Children's mission is to promote awareness of education issues, inspire donors to invest in work that helps children in central Ohio succeed and to mobilize individuals to support education efforts. *Investment in Champion of Children supports:*

- *Educational programs and partnerships* - Funding for innovative, effective programs and initiatives focused on helping to prepare our youth for educational and career success.
- *Annual Franklin County Children's Report* - Highlights and analyzes community issues and statistics related to children and education in central Ohio. To download the 2013 report, Franklin County's Children: Why Neighborhoods Matter to Education, go to [liveunitedcentralohio.org/champion-of-children](http://liveunitedcentralohio.org/champion-of-children).
- *Online Education Journal* - Educates the community through the dissemination of news, research and information relevant to education in central Ohio. To sign up for the journal, go to [liveunitedcentralohio.org/champion-of-children](http://liveunitedcentralohio.org/champion-of-children).
- *Year-round community outreach, engagement and advocacy* - Includes events, activities and volunteer opportunities that increase awareness and commitment to advancing our children's education, build advocacy efforts for those too young to speak for themselves, and connect willing individuals with ways to help children and youth in our community.

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- *Annual Champion of Children individual and nonprofit organization awards* - Awards honor an individual and organization who have exhibited a passion for education and children through their actions, and have had a deep, far-reaching and lasting impact on the lives of children in central Ohio.
- Annual Champion of Children Signature Event - Annual event bringing the best and brightest leaders in education to central Ohio to highlight best practices and key education issues and opportunities. The event also includes the presentation of the, Champions of Children awards. Join us for our 2014 Signature Event on February 11, 2014.

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#### About United Way of Central Ohio

Founded in 1923, United Way of Central Ohio is working to improve lives and strengthen our community by providing pathways out of poverty through our focus on the building blocks of a good life: a quality education that leads to a productive career, enough income to support a family through retirement, good health, and a safe place to live. As one of the largest United Ways in the country, we bring together more than 80,000 donors, advocates and volunteers. For more information, visit [www.liveunitedcentralohio.org](http://www.liveunitedcentralohio.org).