



## Center for Neighborhood Enterprise

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**For Immediate Release**

### **Teens Develop Leadership Skills; Unique Camp Experience Targets Youth from High Risk Neighborhoods**

More than 40 young people from 13 cities across the country honed their leadership skills and developed tools to identify problems and promote solutions in their own neighborhoods at the 2008 Center for Neighborhood Enterprise Weed and Seed Youth Leadership Camp, held July 19-27 on the Stetson University campus in DeLand, FL.

Representatives from Weed and Seed organizations from Rhode Island to Florida and as far west as Reno and California participated, accompanied by their adult chaperones. The camp was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Community Capacity Development, Office of Weed and Seed.

The CNE initiative targets youth from high-risk neighborhoods who want to become positive forces to address problems in their communities. The youth development initiative shows young people how to identify and assess problem behaviors and risk behaviors within their own communities; how to develop solutions; how to build partnerships and effective collaborations; how to develop proposals and business plans to advance youth entrepreneurship; how to strengthen community and civic participation; and how to leverage resources to increase program impact. The camp experience was divided into mini-camps focusing on Leadership; Career Development; Family and Community Life; Sports; and Money Management and Investments. The youngsters also enjoyed ample time for sightseeing, sports, recreation, music, a talent show, and other activities.

“Just as the human body mobilizes against disease, motivated young people can become effective antibodies against the disease of their own communities,” said Robert L. Woodson, Sr., President of the Center for Neighborhood Enterprise.

CNE was founded in 1981 by Woodson to help residents of low-income neighborhoods solve the problems of their communities. The Center has a major focus on programs addressing youth violence with its Violence-Free Zone initiative, a community-based approach to reducing violence in schools and neighborhoods. Other major program areas in addition to the Weed and Seed Youth Leadership Development initiative include Training and Technical Assistance for Community Organizations, and Adult Financial Literacy.

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