

July 2024



# CEO

## Notes from the Field

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Living our values.

Dear Friends and Supporters of All Stars,

I am pleased to launch the All Stars Project (ASP) CEO newsletter, a periodic update on how we are expanding our impact, engaging with thought and community leaders and finding new ways to make a difference in the lives of young people in poor and underserved communities across the country.

At All Stars, we are guided by a powerful set of values—**integrity and trust, partnership with the poor, leading in equity, radically inclusive, imagining possibility and improving the world**—which has always guided us. Now, more than ever, we are embodying these values and creating bold pathways forward.

Additionally, as CEO, I have the privilege of representing ASP on the national stage, and **I am excited to introduce you to the innovative practitioners and inspiring thought leaders that I am meeting.** Through this newsletter, I will share what I am learning and how we are advancing our mission and making a difference in the lives of our youth and our communities.

## LEADERS NETWORK: Bold Partnerships for Change

I recently had the privilege of speaking with **The Leaders Network (LN)** in Chicago, thanks to an invitation from their president and the **founder of ASP of Chicago, David Cherry**. [CLICK HERE](#) to watch a video clip of my remarks.

The LN is a powerful collaborative of faith and community leaders whose mission is to improve life in Chicago's West Side communities—some of the city's poorest—by **creating flourishing neighborhoods with independent leadership, economic justice and equal education for all**.

In the decade since the network was founded, these leaders have never been afraid to challenge the status quo to uplift the communities where most All Stars youth live. We are proud that David Cherry is serving his second term as president of this important organization (he is an exemplary volunteer with LN).

**One of their latest initiatives is a partnership with Great Lakes Credit Union to launch Leaders Network Financial (LNF).**

This new financial institution will increase access to banking services and capital for residents of Austin and surrounding West Side neighborhoods. I'm thrilled to announce that All Stars is supporting LNF, which exemplifies the kind of bold, community-led initiatives our country needs to create lasting change. With an initial \$25,000 deposit, we can build even more pathways to progress for the people of this great city.



# ASPEN IDEAS FESTIVAL: Shaping Tomorrow's Ideas

I was also honored to attend the week-long Aspen Ideas Festival in June, which brings together “brilliant leaders and thinkers from around the globe to discuss the ideas that will shape tomorrow and help us understand today.” This was my first time attending the festival, and it more than lived up to its



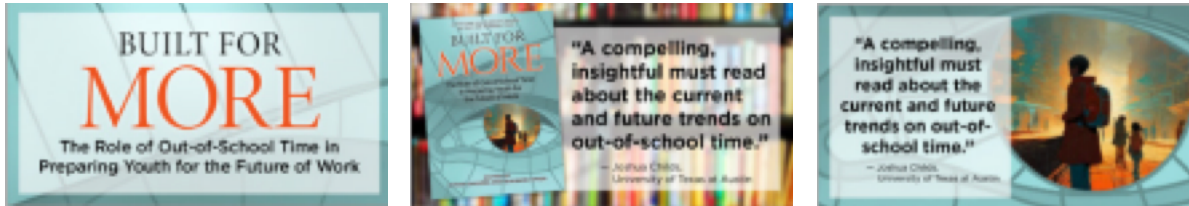
reputation. Among the public officials, artists, educators, journalists, business executives and philanthropists who moderated or presented at the conference were editor, author and Festival curator **Tina Brown**; Ford Foundation CEO **Darren Walker**; the journalists **Katie Couric**, **David Brooks** and **Fareed Zakaria**; singer, actor and FREEAMERICA founder **John Legend**; NAACP Legal Defense Fund president **Sherrilyn Ifill**; and Color Blind Poverty author and Poor People's Campaign co-chair **Reverend William Barber**. Among those I had the pleasure of chatting with were Robin Hood CEO **Richard Buery** and Bridgespan Global partner **Darren Isom**, who is also the founder and executive director of the Memphis Music Initiative, a five-year, \$20 million grantmaking and community arts development initiative.

Of note was a conversation on youth well-being hosted by Aspen Institute president and CEO **Dan Porterfield** with U.S. Surgeon General **Vivek Murthy** and former District of Columbia Public Schools Chancellor and education innovator **Kaya Henderson**, both of whom spoke with passion and compassion about the mental health crisis our young people are facing. Dr. Murthy shared his belief in belonging, purpose and service as key to promoting emotional health, making a better society and helping our kids live more fulfilling lives. In response to a question I asked about the role of afterschool programs, both panelists and moderator were enthusiastic in their support for outside-of-school initiatives and the need to dramatically (and playfully) reimagine schooling so that, as Dr. Murthy said, “our kids are being prepared for life, not the test.”

[CLICK HERE](#) for a clip of C-SPAN's coverage of the panel discussion on afterschool development.



# Built for More has been Published!



**Great news!** *Built for More: The Role of Out-of-School Time in Preparing Youth for the Future of Work*, which features a chapter on the **ASP's pioneering contributions to workforce development authored by Gabrielle Kurlander** (ASP founding CEO, 1989–2023) and me, is now available.

*Built for More* is published by Information Age Publishing as part of its Current Issues in Out-of-School Time, which has over the last seven years emerged as one of the most prestigious voices in the movement to grow and promote the out-of-school time (OST) field. The book was co-edited by Big Thought president and CEO and nationally renowned OST advocate Byron Sanders, who invited us to author the chapter, "Non-Artificial Authentic Intelligence: Creating Ecosystems of Development for Young People Outside of School and in the World of Work." In it, we describe the **All Stars partnership model that was built with caring adults in the corporate community and the vision that emerges from it for a new kind of collaboration between the education, workforce development and nonprofit sectors.** The chapter also features the voices of partners, program alumni and corporate executives who wholeheartedly embrace two-way development and highlights the ASP philosophy and practices that underscore the societal significance of mutual growth and enrichment.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information on how to purchase a copy of *Built for More*.

## CELEBRATING WIL FARRIS: A Champion for Our Youth

In May we learned of the sudden loss a **beloved friend and longtime ASP champion, Wil Farris**. Wil's journey with the ASP of New York spanned nearly two decades, a testament to his enduring dedication and passion. Wil served on the national board of directors from 2008 to 2012.

I want to extend my deep appreciation to everyone who contributed to the GoFundMe campaign In Memoriam for Wil Farris (aka Big Wil), which raised over \$12,000 to help cover funeral costs and to support his family during this difficult time. Additionally, All Stars SVP, Dallas City Leader and Wil's friend, Antoine Joyce, attended the service, where he shared the **powerful and lasting impact Wil's two decades of involvement and volunteerism** have had on our community. It was especially gratifying to hear from Antoine and other All Stars who attended the service how important the donations and support of so many of you were to Wil's widow, Michele, his mother, Helen, and to all the All Stars alumni who knew and loved him. Wil's warm heart, infectious energy and unwavering commitment inspired countless young people and will forever be etched in our hearts.



## 2024 NATIONAL GALA: A Night to Remember

A big shout out to everyone who helped make our 2024 National Gala this past May a truly special night. Over 350 corporate and community guests joined us for a cabaret-inspired celebration of All Stars and our distinguished honorees. **Gabrielle Kurlander**, All Stars founding CEO (1989-2023) was recognized for her incredible leadership and vision for building our grassroots, volunteer-based nonprofit organization into the leading force of Afterschool Development across the country; and our Leaders of Youth Development Honorees **Valerie Brown** (ASP of SF Bay Area Board Chair), **Alysia Steinmann** (Office Managing Partner, Metro NYC, EY), and **Amy Weinberg** (Professor Emerita, University of Maryland) were honored for their powerful commitment to underserved youth across the country. Like always, our young people were front and center, inspiring tears and cheers as they shared the transformational impact All Stars has had on often challenging lives. I am happy to report that we raised over \$2 million in support of reaching many more young people with our life-changing programs.



In my remarks ([CLICK HERE](#) to view), I announced that the decade-long (2018–2027) Campaign for the All Stars Project—which has already raised \$90 million of its \$150 million goal—is entering its public phase. I also shared the news that All Stars in Chicago had just received a visionary commitment of \$2.5 million from the Leslie J. Raffel Foundation (LJRF). Special thanks to the All Star who helped make this happen, **Bobby Gerber**, a managing partner of the Neal Gerber Eisenberg, an LJRF trustee and a cousin of the late Leslie J. Raffel. In honor of the foundation’s generosity, All Stars has named DSY in Chicago, The Leslie J. Raffel Development School for Youth.



As we embark on this journey together, I want to hear from you. What would you like to learn more about? What questions do you have about our work and mission? Please don't hesitate to reach out and share your thoughts. **I look forward to engaging in a dialogue about how we can work together to create a brighter future for our young people.**

Thank you for your support of All Stars. By living our values, representing our mission and committing to learning and development, we are helping to transform lives and communities.

Sincerely,

Chris Street  
President and CEO