

For Immediate Release

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**American Electric Power to Serve as Presenting Sponsor of
2009 Champion of Children Award Event**

Columbus, OH (July 21, 2008) – American Electric Power will serve as Presenting Sponsor of the 2009 Champion of Children Award Event, which will be held on February 3, 2009, at The Southern Theatre. In this role, American Electric Power will host Champion of Children's 16th annual event honoring one individual, nominated by the community, who has served as an outstanding local advocate for children.

This year's event will look at early learning as a critical factor in the development of a child's path toward long term success. Champion of Children's after-work program will be produced in a live news panel format and followed by a reception honoring the award recipient at the Westin.

"Champion of Children has emerged as a leading advocate for the value of high quality early education for our most important resource—our children," said Michael G. Morris, Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer of American Electric Power. "We are proud to join Champion of Children as its 2009 sponsor to not only support our children, but also to salute one of our community champions who is doing great work to enhance the lives of all children in Central Ohio."

"With the support and endorsement of corporations like American Electric Power, the importance of kindergarten readiness can become a community value for central Ohio," said Linda Kass, Champion of Children chairperson. "Champion of Children is one voice, among many, advocating for early learning as a critical strategic component of the educational process. Quality early learning provides children with advantages that accrue throughout the rest of their lives, setting them on a positive path along their educational journey."

Champion of Children is a community funding initiative that, since its inception, has made quality early learning programs available to well over 1,500 Franklin County children so that more children start school ready to learn and have the opportunity for school success. Children from birth through age 5, whose families fall in the gap between those receiving public child care assistance and those who are economically self-sufficient, can currently choose among 30 nationally accredited early learning centers in Franklin County that participate in Champion of Children

For more information on Champion of Children please visit our website, www.championofchildren.org, or call Staci Collier, 614.231.3790 ext 22.