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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**WINNER OF INAUGURAL JOHN P. McNULTY PRIZE ANNOUNCED**

*\$100,000 Award Given to Aspen Global Leadership Network Fellow  
and VisionSpring Founder Jordan Kassalow*

**New York City, NY, November 7, 2008**—The Aspen Institute and Anne Welsh McNulty are pleased to announce that Dr. Jordan Kassalow, founder of VisionSpring, has been awarded the inaugural John P. McNulty Prize. Meant to celebrate the spirit and memory of Institute trustee John P. McNulty, the \$100,000 prize supports extraordinary young leaders making creative, effective, and lasting contributions to their communities and will be given annually to an Aspen Global Leadership Network (AGLN) Fellow.

On Thursday evening, November 6, McNulty appeared at the Aspen Institute's 25th Annual Awards Dinner at the Plaza Hotel in New York City to praise all five finalists and unveil the name of the winner. Along with the McNulty Prize, the Institute proudly presented Peter G. Peterson, Senior Chairman and Co-Founder of The Blackstone Group, with the Aspen Institute Corporate Achievement Award, and outgoing Institute Chairman William E. Mayer, a senior partner at Park Avenue Equity Partners, with the Henry Crown Leadership Award.

As the winner of the McNulty Prize, Kassalow will be able to use the \$100,000 award to help further his outstanding initiative. A successful NY optometrist, Kassalow has devised an innovative way to deliver affordable eyeglasses to the poor, whose income can be disproportionately affected by deteriorating eyesight. His “Business in a Bag” concept employs a micro-franchise model that empowers rural entrepreneurs to start their own businesses selling affordable glasses, simultaneously creating jobs while addressing a community need. VisionSpring (formerly Scojo Foundation) and its partners now support over 850 “Vision Entrepreneurs” who have sold over 150,000 pairs of glasses in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

“The simple elegance of Jordan's solution to a basic human need—a franchise model to deliver eyeglasses which can extend the productive work life of the poor in remote rural areas—is

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unique and inspiring,” said Anne Welsh McNulty, an Institute trustee and the co-founder and managing partner of JBK Partners. “I think my husband, John, would have been very excited by the creative and sustainable business model of VisionSpring, by the number of women entrepreneurs VisionSpring has helped empower, and by Jordan's energy and persistence in dramatically expanding this project to multiple countries across three continents.”

Kassalow, along with the four other finalists, was reviewed by a distinguished panel of judges consisting of Virgin Group chairman and philanthropist Sir Richard Branson; Mary Robinson, the first female President of Ireland; and Olara Otunnu, the President of LBL Foundation for Children and former UN Under-Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. This year's other finalists were Patrick Awuah, who founded Ashesi University in Ghana; Mehrdad Baghai, the creator of High Resolves Initiative, a hands-on educational program in Australia; William Bynum, who established Hope Community Credit Union to serve the "unbanked" of the Mississippi Delta Region; and Sylvia Gereda, the author of a special weekly magazine edited by teenagers that features cover stories on young community leaders.

For more information about the John P. McNulty Prize, visit [www.mcultyprize.org](http://www.mcultyprize.org). To learn about VisionSpring, visit [www.visionspring.org](http://www.visionspring.org).

**The Aspen Global Leadership Network** is a worldwide community of entrepreneurial business, government and civil society leaders committed to values-based leadership. Through its programs, the AGLN is spurring these leaders-Fellows-to move from success to significance and from thought to action by tackling the foremost societal challenges of our times. Collectively, the more than 850 Fellows from 38 countries that currently comprise the AGLN have the potential to make a measurable impact on some of the world's most intractable issues. More information on AGLN is available at [www.aspeninstitute.org/agln](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/agln).

**The Aspen Institute** mission is twofold: to foster values-based leadership, encouraging individuals to reflect on the ideals and ideas that define a good society, and to provide a neutral and balanced venue for discussing and acting on critical issues. The Aspen Institute does this primarily in four ways: seminars, young-leader fellowships around the globe, policy programs and public conferences and events. The Institute is based in Washington, DC, Aspen, Colorado, and on the Wye River on Maryland's Eastern Shore and has an international network of partners. For more information, visit [www.aspeninstitute.org](http://www.aspeninstitute.org).

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