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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

AINSLEY'S ANGELS GRADUATES EIGHT MEMBERS FROM THE INAUGURAL ALLY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Virginia Beach, VA – Ainsley's Angels of America, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting inclusion and accessibility, is excited to announce the graduation of eight Ally Development Program (ADP) participants. This innovative program aims to empower individuals to become agents of change in their local communities, advocating for inclusion and accessibility for all.

The ADP is a 6-month program that combines in-person and online learning, covering topics such as diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as accessibility, advocacy, and leadership development. Participants engage in monthly reading assignments, online coursework, and bi-monthly virtual meetings, culminating in a community inclusion project in their local area. Community inclusion projects have ranged from accessible urban gardens to CPR training, to working to remedy accessibility issues in local communities (i.e. curb cuts, ramps) to creating all-inclusive events and movie experiences.

“ADP is all about promoting inclusion in communities across the USA,” said Shaun Evans, Senior Vice President of Programs, Ainsley’s Angels of America. “Over the last year, it has been amazing to educate and develop these eight allies who can now promote disability, inclusion and accessibility awareness, all while advocating for changes and needs in their local communities.”

The 2024 graduates include the following:

- **Abby Zucker**, Chicago, IL: "Inclusion is a way of life. I hope to learn how to stand up for what is right and take values that are meaningful to me and push them out into the real world."
- **Courtney Eicholtz**, Colonia, NJ: "I have been paralyzed from the waist down since 2006. I have made a difference and perfected how to achieve whatever mission is sent my way."
- **Debbie Stachkunas**, Colonial Beach, VA: "We became part of the pink village where my children have experienced an inclusive community. I hope to learn skills that will make my little town a more inclusive place."
- **Jamie MacDonald**, Houston, TX: "Inclusion is important because our work is not done till it's the norm. I'm hoping to gain knowledge on how to help tackle society's nervousness by being inclusive."
- **Jessica Rohn**, Indianapolis, IN: "Inclusion is important because it ensures everyone is being respected and heard...I hope to increase my advocacy skills and create a space of belonging in my community."
- **Kuldeep N. Yadav**, Houston, TX: "Inclusion and belonging mean that no one is left out. I am looking for guidance, support, and education on how to identify and establish long-lasting opportunities for inclusion."
- **Lauren Hagedorn**, Madison, WI: "Inclusion is important to me because I believe we share the very best of us when we feel connected, supported, uplifted, and empowered by one another."
- **Tamara Scott**, Philadelphia, PA: "Inclusion is important to me because I don't want to just know what works for me...I want to know what works best for the broader community."

Ainsley's Angels of America would like to extend their gratitude to their generous sponsors, who have made the Ally Development Program possible:

- **Mass Mutual**: As a leading insurance company, Mass Mutual has demonstrated their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion by supporting the ADP. Their contribution has enabled Ainsley's Angels to empower individuals to become agents of change in their communities.
- **ASICS**: ASICS, a renowned sportswear brand, has partnered with Ainsley's Angels to promote inclusion and accessibility in sports and beyond. Their support has been instrumental in helping the ADP participants bring their community inclusion projects to life.

Apply for the Next Cohort

The ADP second cohort is scheduled to launch in January 2025, with applications now open. Expenses for travel to in-person events and course supplies will be covered for all selected participants. Applications are available until October 31, 2024. For more information and to apply, please visit www.ainsleysangels.org/adp.

Ainsley's Angels of America

Ainsley's Angels is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting inclusion and accessibility for all. Together, We Shall educate, advocate and celebrate inclusive communities while connecting everyone through empowerment and belonging. The organization's vision is to create a world where everyone can live an inclusive life, free from limitations.

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