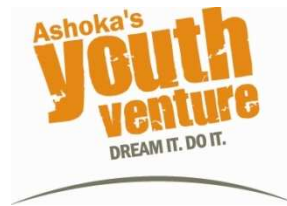




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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Finalist Announced in Annual Staples/Ashoka Youth Social Entrepreneur Competition

Team of Massachusetts Youth Recognized for Educating Teens about Global Child Sex Trade

ARLINGTON, Va. — July 28, 2010— [Ashoka](#), the world's community of leading social entrepreneurs, and [Staples](#), Inc. (NASDAQ: SPLS), announced today that Minga, a youth-run civic organization dedicated to ending the global child sex trade through educating teens worldwide, has been selected as the first of eight finalists in the [Staples/Ashoka Youth Social Entrepreneurs \(YSE\) Competition](#). The global competition recognizes youth-led organizations who are addressing social issues affecting their communities, and is part of Ashoka's [Youth Venture](#)[®], an initiative that identifies and fosters young entrepreneurs all over the world who are creating positive change.

The eight finalists of the Staples/YSE competition will receive cash prizes, consulting from Staples executives and an all-expenses-paid trip to speak at TEDxYSE, a Youth Venture hosted conference held in Washington, DC in November. TEDxYSE leverages the global TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) conference model, which enables local community groups to organize, design and host their own independent, TED-like events.

Minga was founded by a group of thirteen-year-olds when they learned that more than two million children are sold into the global child sex trade each year. As high school students, they felt their peers around the world deserved to be treated with dignity and respect. In the language of Ecuador, "minga" means "the coming together of a community for the betterment of all." Through the launch of Minga's "Let's Get Real" campaign, Minga team members teach youth across the U.S. and around the world about the issue of the child sex trade in order to prevent future generations from allowing this issue to persist.

Rebecca Kantar, who recently graduated from Newton North High School in Newton, Massachusetts, is a founding member of Minga. She serves as Minga's Director of Film Media and is a highly accomplished public speaker. She has presented Minga's message and accomplishments in front of audiences at Harvard University, Cornell Medical School, and the Clinton Global Initiative Conference. Rebecca has also been named as one of *TIME Magazine's* Tomorrow25. This award honors 25 juniors from an international pool of applicants, who will likely be future leaders in public service or science. Rebecca will be attending Harvard University as a freshman in September.

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The Staples/YSE competition is open to existing and new Youth Venture teams, which are made up of young people between the ages of 12 and 24, who are creating entrepreneurial ventures that make a positive impact on communities. Nominations and entries will be accepted on a rolling basis through Sept. 20, 2010. For additional information on the Staples/Ashoka Youth Social Entrepreneur Competition, please visit the competition website at: <http://www.genv.net/en-us/staples-yse>.

Ashoka's Youth Venture® engages over 75,000 young people in pursuing their dreams to create change in 18 countries around the world. Since its founding in 1996, Youth Venture has launched nearly 4,000 Venture teams worldwide – one-third of which have launched as a direct result of SFFL's five-year partnership with Ashoka. SFFL's commitment to supporting Ashoka's vision of Everyone A Changemaker™ has been instrumental in expanding Youth Venture's offerings and opportunities to help young people, like the founders of Minga, create positive change. Since 2006, [Staples Foundation for Learning](#), the charitable arm of Staples, Inc., has enabled Youth Venture to expand to eight countries in North America, South America and Europe through more than \$2.5 million in funding.

About Youth Venture

Ashoka's Youth Venture aims to help an entire generation of young people develop as changemakers, who will improve their communities now and throughout their lives. Youth Venture inspires and supports teams of young people to launch and lead their own civic-minded organizations and businesses. Youth teams access workshops, tools, adult allies, a global network of like-minded young changemakers and seed funding to establish their own ventures that solve problems around them. Youth Venture was created by Ashoka, the global pioneer of the social entrepreneurship sector and the world's biggest network of changemakers. We believe that the greatest contribution we can make to the world is to increase dramatically the number of changemakers today and in every future generation. This is the key factor for success for every part of society, from a school to a company to an entire country. Ashoka's Youth Venture operates in 18 countries and online at www.GenV.net.

About Ashoka

Ashoka is the world's community of leading social entrepreneurs—individuals with innovative and practical ideas for addressing social needs. Working with these social entrepreneurs, Ashoka builds communities of innovators who work collectively to transform society and design new ways for the social sector to become more productive, entrepreneurial and globally integrated. For more information, please visit www.ashoka.org.

About Staples

Staples, the world's largest [office products](#) company, is committed to making it easy for customers to buy a wide range of office products and services. Our broad selection of [office supplies](#), [electronics](#), [technology](#) and [office furniture](#) as well as business services, including [computer repair](#) and [copying](#) and [printing](#), helps our customers run their offices efficiently. With 2009 sales of \$24 billion and 91,000 associates worldwide, Staples operates in 25 countries throughout North and South America, Europe, Asia and Australia serving businesses of all sizes and consumers. Staples invented the [office superstore](#) concept in 1986 and today ranks second worldwide in e-commerce sales. The company is headquartered outside Boston. More information about Staples (Nasdaq: SPLS) is available at www.staples.com/media.

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