



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Ariel Investments Receives
Community Investment Award**

Ariel Investments has been named the recipient of the Mutual Fund Education Alliance's **Community Investment Award** for 2008, in recognition of the company's Ariel Education Initiative. The award was bestowed at the MFEA's 2008 **STAR Awards** presentation held at the Swissôtel in Chicago on September 16. This prestigious award was created to recognize the mutual fund firm that most effectively uses its resources to support the community through special programs, partnerships, in-kind goods and services, and employee volunteerism in community programs and philanthropic efforts. (*See separate press release listing all Star Awards winners.*)

Accepting the award for Ariel, Merrilyn Kosier, Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, Mutual Funds, emphasized the importance of teamwork inside and outside of the company. "In addition to working hard on our clients' behalf, we believe we have a responsibility to work equally as hard on behalf of the communities in which we live and work," she said.

Ariel's standout program, The Ariel Educational Initiative, was established in 1989 to advance educational opportunities in economically disadvantaged areas. As part of the effort, Ariel encourages academic excellence through its support of the Ariel Community Academy, a Chicago public school. In addition to the mandated public school curriculum, Ariel Community Academy has incorporated concepts of investing and financial literacy into the classroom. Through a partnership with Nuveen Investments, the Ariel-Nuveen Investment program awards each incoming first grade class with a \$20,000 grant. The class as a whole is actively involved in the management of the investment until their high school graduation. Upon graduation, all profits that have accumulated are divided in half, with one-half given to the school as a class gift, and the other half distributed among graduates as cash or matched contributions for a 529 college savings plan.

Presented annually by the MFEA, the Community Investment Award was established to demonstrate the significant role that mutual fund companies play in supporting their communities.

"Ariel Mutual Funds sets the standard for all companies when it comes to community involvement," said Michelle Smith, MFEA Managing Director. "Their leadership in corporate citizenship exemplifies how fund companies can serve their investors and touch the lives of many more in the communities in which they live and do business. Plus, the Ariel Education Initiative illustrates the benefits of long-term investing right in the classroom."

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The **STAR Awards for Excellence in Shareholder Communications** also were presented at the dinner. The **STAR Awards** program is a prestigious recognition of mutual fund companies who excel in investor education, marketing, education and communications for fund shareholders, advisors and the investing public. ([See separate release for details.](#))

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The Mutual Fund Education Alliance is the national trade association of mutual fund marketers and distributors. Since 1971, the MFEA has been dedicated to informing and educating the investing public about how to achieve important lifetime goals using mutual funds. The members of the Alliance represent nearly \$5 trillion in mutual fund assets.