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Mayor's Office for Education and Children Honors Carlo Kriekels
YESS Institute Executive Director Receives Heavy Lifting Award for Commitment to Youth

Carlo Kriekels, co-founder and executive director of The YESS Institute, received the **Heavy Lifting Award** on May 10, 2011 in recognition of his numerous contributions to the Denver community. Presented by the Mayor's Office for Education and Children, the award recognizes an individual's commitment to making children and youth a top priority, and honors those who have increased the development and academic success of Denver's children and youth through advances in the areas of research, policy, programming and public awareness.

The YESS Institute provides secondary school students the skills to shift the negative cycle of poverty, dropout and violence into a positive cycle of leadership development, civic engagement and economic contribution through peer mentoring and emotional intelligence. The 501(c)(3) not-for-profit also provides emotional intelligence/leadership training for staff at nonprofit agencies.

Since its founding in 2001, The YESS Institute has offered youth training/peer-mentoring programs in 12 Denver-metro schools serving 700 youth, provided training workshops to staff at more than 80 local nonprofits, and presented at regional and national conferences related to youth development. The YESS Institute is one of 13 local agencies currently partnering in the Youth Mentoring Collaborative.

Born in Belgium, Kriekels holds two law degrees (a J.D. from Belgium and a LL.M from Germany) and is fluent in six languages, including Spanish. After completing an intensive four-year training program in personal development coaching, he taught leadership and emotional intelligence skills to business leaders in Europe and the United States for many years. Kriekels co-founded the YESS Institute to bring the benefits of emotional intelligence training to at-risk youth and the nonprofit agencies that serve youth. As executive director, he oversees the development of the YESS curriculum and overall agency operations, including fiscal management and financial development; program operations and quality assurance; staffing and staff development; advocacy, public relations and training/coaching of adults and youth.

To learn more about The YESS Institute and its programs, visit www.yessinstitute.org.