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YOUTH SERVICE AMERICA RECOGNIZES COMMITMENT TO SERVICE AND CIVIC INVOLVMENT THROUGH THE 2005 HARRIS WOFFORD AWARDS

*Prestigious Awards Will Be Given At The 2005 National Service-Learning Conference
In Long Beach, CA*

WASHINGTON -- March 7, 2005 -- Youth Service America (YSA) today announced the three winners of the fourth annual Harris Wofford Awards, named in honor of the former U.S. Senator from Pennsylvania and CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Recognizing one young person, one institution, and one media organization, the Wofford Awards will be presented on March 18, 2005, at the 16th annual National Service-Learning Conference at the Long Beach Convention Center in Long Beach, CA.

The Harris Wofford Award Recipients include:

- **Individual Winner** – Katie Pugh (Sylacauga, Alabama)

Katie Pugh is a 20-year-old college student from Sylacauga, Alabama who has been actively engaged in service and service-learning since she was a young child. She has performed multiple service projects for her church, school, and local nonprofit organizations. One of Katie's significant service efforts included devoting a year towards a high quality service-learning program for her school district. She worked closely with students, teachers, school administrators, and community leaders to create a service-learning program that would be awarded a Carnegie Unit Credit, when completed. Her service-learning program was implemented the following school year.

- **Institutional Winner** – Alternatives, Inc. (Hampton, Virginia)

Since 1990, Alternatives, Inc., a private, nonprofit youth development agency serving the citizens of Hampton, VA, has worked cooperatively with the Hampton Coalition for Youth, the local government department responsible for youth issues and services. Over the years this relationship has been a true partnership as well as a contract for services. In 1994, the City of Hampton selected Alternatives, Inc. to implement the youth civic engagement component of the Coalition's strategic plan based on the exceptional quality of their youth development work and their willingness and ability to work as part of a collaborative relationship. Above and beyond the specific contract, the City government relies on the agency to identify and tackle youth issues as they arise in the City. This facilitates a sense of shared ownership of the city's youth agenda and the ongoing dialogue that it takes to implement a joint approach.

- **Media Winner** – Jasper Newsboy (Jasper, Texas)

The Jasper Newsboy, which rolled its first issue off the press in July 1865, is the oldest continuously published weekly newspaper in Texas. Published every Wednesday and available by home delivery, mail or vending machines, the Newsboy is a local general news publication with a mix of features, sports, and in-depth news about education, government, and other issues. It is distributed in the Jasper trade area, which includes parts of Jasper, Newton, Sabine and Tyler counties. The Newsboy is a committed community partner that often goes above and beyond news reporting when covering good news about young people in its community. For example, under its masthead the paper names someone from the community who deserves recognition. It reads, "Jasper, Texas. Home of (a local person)." Often the individual that is recognized is a young person and there is an accompanying article featuring the recognized youth. In addition, the paper consistently covers school events, student accomplishments, and positive news stories about community happenings. In addition, the Jasper Newsboy directly touches their readers and offers youth many opportunities to work in their newsroom.

The three winners will receive a plaque at the State Farm Awards Luncheon during the 2005 National Service-Learning Conference, commemorating their achievement, and the individual youth recipient will be awarded \$500 to support their education. An additional \$500 will be donated to a nonprofit service organization of the youth's choice to support program activities.

Underwritten by the State Farm Companies Foundation, Youth Service America created the Harris Wofford Awards four years ago as a recognition program to honor the life work of Harris Wofford in making service and service-learning *the common expectation and common experience of every young person in America*. Setting an example through his work in the civil rights movement, helping to launch the Peace Corps, and making AmeriCorps a permanent part of the domestic landscape, Wofford is a pioneer of the modern service movement in the United States. The former senator is a board member of Youth Service America, the Points of Light Foundation, and America's Promise.

"During the last 60 years, Harris Wofford has been a driving force in the power of people, particularly youth, to change the world for the better," said Steve Culbertson, president and CEO of Youth Service America. "This award recognizes both a demonstrated record towards this vision, and the potential to bring more young people to the tables of community leadership," Culbertson added.

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About State Farm: State Farm insures more cars and homes than any other insurer in North America. State Farm's 100,000 associates serve nearly 73 million auto, fire, life and health policies in the United States and Canada. State Farm also offers financial services products. State Farm is ranked No. 18 on the Fortune 500 list of largest companies. For more information, please visit statefarm.com

Youth Service America is a national nonprofit resource center that partners with thousands of other organizations committed to growing the youth service movement. Youth Service America's programs and services increase the effectiveness, sustainability, and scale of the youth service and service-learning fields on a local, national, and global level. In addition to [National Youth Service Day](#) and [Global Youth Service Day](#), happening April 15-17, 2005, YSA also hosts SERVENet (www.SERVENet.org), providing the largest database of volunteer opportunities in America. For more information, please visit www.YSA.org.