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YWCA DAYTON RECEIVES GIRL SCOUT COMMUNITY PROJECT DONATION

Blue Jean Bag project to benefit homeless women served by the YWCA Dayton.

DAYTON, OH, October 10, 2008 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- ToMaris Davis, a member of Girl Scout Troop 30069, chose the YWCA Dayton as recipient of her community project and with it has completed the requirements for the Girl Scout Silver Award, the highest award that a Girl Scout 11 to 14 years of age may earn. To receive the award, Girl Scout members must complete at least 40 hours on her community project and the award is representative of a girl's achievements in working to enrich her life and the lives of others in the community. ToMaris titled her project "Blue Jean Bags (BJBs)" and spent a total of 50 hours fashioning bags from blue jean pants or skirts. She collected donations of jeans from St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church, Alpha Kappa Alpha - Rho Omega Chapter and her fellow Girl Scouts of Troop 30069. Under ToMaris's leadership, her fellow troop members, family and friends decorated the bags. Each bag was also filled with personal care items and a note of encouragement.

When asked why she chose to do the project and why she chose the YWCA Dayton ToMaris answered, "My reason for selecting this project is as many as 3.5 million people experience homelessness in a given year which is 1% of the entire U. S. population or 10% of its poor. Projections are that in the future most of the homeless in the United States will be single mothers with children. Knowing these statistics, I decided to choose a project to help a few women who are homeless at the YWCA Dayton to carry their belongings in something that is durable and cute. In the movie, *The Pursuit of Happiness*, it was stated that homeless people do not have luggage because they are constantly on the move and it tends to get lost during their many moves. It's a well-known fact that blue jeans can take some serious abuse. It's not unusual for a good pair of jeans to be worn many years after date of purchase. So, I decided to make a washable, blue jean bag that is small enough to hold a few items."

Tenita Davis, Tomaris' mother, said that "ToMaris has always enjoyed making things such as key chains and jewelry and this project allowed her to do something she enjoyed to give back to the community." ToMaris Davis is a student at Northmont High School where she is Sophomore Class Treasurer. She is also a member of the School Chorus, Blitz Hip Hop Dance Team and a member of the St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church Youth Choir.

ToMaris and members of Girl Scout Troop 30069 made the donation to the YWCA Dayton on Saturday, September 27, 2008. Present were: Olivia Wilson, Junior at Meadowdale High School; Vanessa Luckett, Parent Volunteer; ToMaris Davis, Project Leader and Sophomore at Northmont Senior High School; Cynthia Edwards, Project Advisor and Girl Scout Troop 30069 Troop Leader; Deidre Luckett, Senior at Trotwood-Madison High School; Chrisha Stargell, 7th grader at Stivers School for the Arts; and Yvonne Wilson, Girl Scout Troop Leader from Dayton.

For more information on how to make a donation to the YWCA Dayton, please call or e-mail Angie Hoschouer at 937-461-5550 x179 or ahoschouer@ywcadayton.org or visit the YWCA Dayton website at www.ywcadayton.org.

About YWCA Dayton

Formed in 1870, the YWCA Dayton has been meeting the ever-changing needs of women and girls in the Miami Valley. The YWCA has been at the forefront of causes that enable it to work towards its mission of "eliminating racism, empowering women." For further information, please contact us at www.ywcadayton.org