

GOOD CITIZENSHIP

America's Top Ten Youth Volunteers

(NAPSA)—Ten middle and high school students have been named America's top youth volunteers in the 15th annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

The honorees include a former homeless girl who led a school project to write and publish a book of stories about homeless people; a Vietnamese-American boy who raises money to provide scholarships and school supplies for poor students in Vietnam; and an autistic girl who supports numerous charities with her singing and artwork.

Also among the honorees are a 14-year-old student who hosts monthly birthday parties for children at a homeless shelter, a 12-year-old girl who collects and purchases vitamin tablets for malnourished kids in Guatemala, and a high school senior who has provided nearly 700,000 prepaid phone cards to American soldiers by recycling cell phones.

Ranging in age from 12 to 18, the honorees were selected on the basis of their personal initiative, effort and impact. They received personal awards of \$5,000, engraved gold medallions, crystal trophies for the schools or organizations that nominated them, and \$5,000 grants from The Prudential Foundation for the charities of their choice.

The award ceremony was part of a four-day celebration that brought the top two youth volunteers from each state to the nation's capital with their parents to be recognized for their outstanding acts of community service. Selected from nearly 20,000



Former First Lady Laura Bush congratulates two recipients of The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

applicants across the country, the young volunteers were personally congratulated by former First Lady Laura W. Bush and U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan while in Washington, D.C.

"The young people receiving these awards genuinely care about making a difference in the lives of others and have accomplished so much—in their own communities and around the world," said Mrs. Bush. "Students with this kind of commitment and leadership ability are essential to the future of our nation."

Conducted in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), the awards were created 14 years ago by Prudential Financial, Inc. to encourage youth volunteerism and to identify and reward young role models. Since then, the program has honored nearly 90,000 young volunteers at local, state and national levels.

For more information about the awards and this year's honorees, visit <http://spirit.prudential.com>.