

OFFICE OF FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr., *Governor* • Isaac E. Randolph, Jr., *Executive Director*

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Indianapolis Resident Honored For National Service



TaShawna Williams (center) accepts her award from OFBCI Executive Director Isaac Randolph (left) and USA Freedom Corps Director Henry Lozano (right).

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (March 25, 2008) It was TaShawna Williams' "quiet strength" and "genuine heart" that motivated LeeAnn Harris, Program Manager for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Indianapolis to nominate Williams for the Governor's Volunteer Service Award for National Service. Williams, an AmeriCorps member received the award at the 5th Annual Governor's Conference on Service and Volunteerism in Indianapolis on March 25th. The Governor's Awards for Volunteer Service are Indiana's most prestigious awards celebrating the accomplishments of dedicated volunteers and

practitioners from across the State. An individual is nominated in each of the six categories of youth, service-learning, faith-based, volunteerism, national service and lifetime achievement.

Williams is completing her 2nd term as an AmeriCorps member serving at the Wheeler-Dowe Boys and Girls Club in the Martindale-Brightwood neighborhood of Indianapolis, where she volunteers approximately 80 hours per month through her AmeriCorps position and about another 10 hours a month through her church and youth affiliations. As an AmeriCorps volunteer, she serves as an after-school tutor, a group leader and role model. She has worked with over 500 youth while at the club, and works intensively with 30 youth through structured youth groups that she facilitates. One of her latest endeavors was to assist a group of seven teens in receiving a grant of \$2,800.00 to complete a Youth as Resources service project making stuffed animals to be donated to Children's Guardian home.

A frequent speaker at rallies and youth conferences, Williams has served as Youth Director at Zion Tabernacle Church where she conducted and planned a free summer youth camp, and lead

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youth service projects at local nursing homes, the Children's Guardian home, a Stop the Violence rally, and Project Hope.

Overcoming a background where she experienced domestic violence, Harris notes that "Williams relates to the sense of fear, shame, and unworthiness that so many young people face today." "She has been an active volunteer for the past 10 years, and though she is still a relatively young person, had touched the lives of hundreds of those who are around her," continues Harris. "TaShawna has such a genuine heart and pure spirit that she exemplifies what National Service is all about."

Williams joined five other Indiana award recipients recognized for their commitment to civic engagement during the award luncheon at the Governor's conference. "Generations of Hoosiers have been contributing to their communities. There is never a task too great or a job too small. As I travel our state, I am constantly reminded of the positive impact that volunteers make on the quality of life for our neighbors," said Governor Mitch Daniels.

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The Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives promotes service and volunteerism in the State of Indiana. Working together with other government agencies, AmeriCorps*State programs, volunteer centers, and faith-based and community organizations, the OFBCI helps Hoosiers to develop and implement solutions in their own communities.
