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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Middle School Essay Contest Winners Announced

ROCKFORD – Three Rockford middle school students received \$50 gift certificates as winners of the City of Rockford Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council (MYAC) 2013 essay contest. The Grand Prize winners are Terranisha Purifoy, 6th grade, and Gabriela Muniz, 8th grade, both of Flinn Middle School and Sebastian Rodriguez, 7th grade, RESA Middle School. Austin Steiner, 7th grade, RESA Middle School, received Honorable Mention and a \$25 gift card. Gift cards were compliments of the Rockford Housing Authority.

Students were asked to address one of the following essay topics: “What can you, as a youth member of your community, personally do to improve Rockford?” or “What in your opinion are the strengths of the Rockford community and why?”

“The responses were great,” said Annie Hobson, MYAC Advisor and Outreach Worker for the City of Rockford Human Services Department. “Terranisha Purifoy wants to see more help for struggling students in the schools. Gabriela Muniz suggested emphasizing the community’s strengths, such as the teachers, churches, youth clubs and emergency response personnel. Sebastian Rodriguez felt students should make a commitment to picking up trash and recycling, but also emphasized that ‘Helping your community isn’t a job; it’s a responsibility.’ Austin Steiner noted the importance of getting to know your neighbors in helping to work for a better community.”

“The students provided very thoughtful ideas in their essays,” Hobson continued. “The MYAC members who judged the entries were pleased to see students of their age offering solutions that were thoughtful yet practical and workable.”

(more)

MYAC is comprised of area high school aged youth committed to civic engagement who plan related projects and opportunities for leadership development and community involvement. MYAC is funded by City of Rockford Human Services Department (a Community Action Agency) through the Community Services Block Grant, and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

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Photo Identification

Flinn Middle School (Left to Right)

Gabriela Muniz, Annie Hobson (MYAC Advisor), Terranisha Purifoy

RESA Middle School (Left to Right)

Sebastian Rodriguez, Annie Hobson (MYAC Advisor), Austin Steiner