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Sodexo Foundation Honors Youth Tackling Hunger

STOP Hunger Scholarship winners demonstrate first steps in a lifetime of social leadership and community involvement

PR Newswire

GAITHERSBURG, Md., June 10

GAITHERSBURG, Md., June 10 /PRNewswire/ -- A fourth grader who started a foundation to feed children; and a college sophomore who was deeply touched by assistance his family received are two of the five national STOP Hunger Scholarship recipients recognized by the Sodexo Foundation at its annual fundraising dinner in Washington, D.C. on June 10. The Foundation, the anti-hunger charitable arm of Sodexo, Inc., will honor each of the scholarship recipients with \$5,000 for their education as well as a matching grant in their name for the hunger-related charity of their choice.

"Each of these winners demonstrates that today's youth are not willing to wait to inherit the problem of hunger that has plagued generations of Americans. They're rolling up their sleeves, founding non-profit organizations, volunteering their time, ideas and energy, and mobilizing their generation," said Stephen J. Brady, president of the Sodexo Foundation. "These exceptional young leaders are setting a magnificent example for others on how to apply their creativity and passion to making a difference."

The five national STOP Hunger Scholars who were selected from more than 9,100 applicants are:

- Melissa Monette, 18, of Mililani, Hawaii, founder and president of A Harvest for Many, a non-profit organization, has led efforts to harvest and distribute 32,000 pounds of food, helping 295 feeding programs and reaching 133,000 individuals. Monette solicits homeowners statewide to donate surplus fruits and vegetables; and encourages canned food drives with farms, churches, supermarkets and community service clubs in schools. On a monthly basis, Monette combines aerobic dance classes with vegetarian meals, including dietitian-led presentations on the dietary needs for all age groups.
- Katie Stagliano, 11, of Summerville, S.C., founder of Katie's Krops, planted five sustainable vegetable gardens that provide healthy food for local soup kitchens, for food banks and directly to families in need. When she is not tending the gardens, she composts to provide nutrients to help her vegetables grow. The latest project started by Katie has been to grow a sixth vegetable garden at The Palmetto House – the homeless shelter where she donates her produce. Current and former residents of the shelter with help from Katie and her friends planted the garden and will continue to assist by weeding, watering and fertilizing.
- Michael Thomas Sullivan, 18, of Wantagh, N.Y., began recovering surplus food after concerts, wedding receptions and company parties at the age of 9 with the organization Rock and Wrap It Up. Once he learned to drive, he organized a program to pick up surplus food after sporting events at Nassau Coliseum and drive it to local shelters. Now at college, Michael continues his philanthropic efforts by rescuing surplus food from campus and donating it. Since the sixth grade he has helped make sandwiches for the

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needy with members of his church's outreach program helping to serve 8,000 hot meals and making 18,000 sandwiches for hungry people.

- Joshua Williams, 9, of Miami Beach, Fla. established Joshua's Heart Foundation at the age of five "so that all children would be as full as I am." To date Joshua's efforts have fed more than 1,000 families, raised more than \$80,000 and distributed more than a quarter million pounds of food. When he is not distributing food or raising money for those in need, Joshua makes media appearances, attends events, and gives speeches at local schools – all to engage and educate the community.
- Kevin Anthony Williams, 20, of Secaucus, N.J., founded the Wrap 4 A Smile Foundation, Inc. in 2005 to fight poverty and stop hunger. He started fighting hunger when he was 15. His efforts include coordinating annual fundraising events with local restaurants, serving as a guest speaker about hunger at after school programs, as well as setting up volunteer projects for companies and schools. To date Kevin has prepared and served 4,100 meals, raised \$60,000, and coordinated volunteers to pack and distribute 45,000 hygiene kits and 13,800 clothing and stationery items for more than 20 emergency shelters and pantries. In 2008 and 2009, Kevin was recognized as a STOP Hunger Regional Honoree for his work with the Wrap 4 A Smile Foundation.

In addition, 19 Regional Honorees will each receive a \$1,000 grant in their name to support the hunger-related charity of their choice. Go to the Sodexo Foundation website www.SodexoFoundation.org for the full list of honorees.

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