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GIRLS ACTION NETWORK SALUTES SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Middle School Students, Akosua L. Mensah, and Na'Lah Clark both from New Jersey, and Sayyidah N. Wright, from Georgia Receive Girls Action Network® Scholarships to Attend the Wesleyan College Spectacles Summer programs I and II in Macon, GA.

New York, NY – **October 1, 2010, Akosua L. Mensah, Na'Lah Clark, and Sayyidah N. Wright** all attended the **Wesleyan College Spectacles Summer Programs I and II** in Macon, Georgia. Both Akosua and Sayyidah attending Spectacles program I, which was geared towards rising sixth and seventh graders. Na'Lah attended Spectacles II, which was geared towards rising eighth and ninth graders. The Spectacles programs are math and science camps for middle-school girls sponsored by Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia. Wesleyan finds that, "Middle school is a crucial time for girls as they view the world and the options that are before them. It is often the time when they make decisions about their interests and abilities in science and math."

For these GAN girls, the journey began in early May, when they participated in and completed a rigorous application process, including two essays, teacher recommendations and a phone interview. They were notified in mid-June that they were each to be awarded the scholarship. **Akosua L. Mensa**, an Orange, New Jersey resident who is a student at **St. Phillips Academy** in **Newark, New Jersey**, was officially awarded a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by **Girls Action Network ("GAN")**. **Na'Lah Clark**, a Newark, New Jersey resident is also a student at **St. Phillips Academy**. She was officially awarded a \$1,200 scholarship. Finally, **Sayyidah N. Wright**, a Douglasville, Georgia resident who is a student at **New Manchester Elementary School** in **Douglasville, Georgia**, was officially awarded a \$600 scholarship, along with the generous assistance of Wesleyan College. Upon being notified, Sayyidah had this to share ***"I stopped and thought about my mother trying to get the money for me to go to the Science camp at Wesleyan College. She made a lot of phone calls and tried to come up with half of the money, [but] Girls Action Network came all the way through. GAN ALL THE WAY!!"***

In addition to the away-from-home experience offered through Wesleyan, the week long programs offered the girls the opportunity to explore science and math in innovative ways, such as creating DNA bracelets or sharing ideas and thoughts with a nightly guest speaker, usually a woman with a career in science and math-related fields. Upon their return, the GAN girls were asked to complete a GAN post-program essay describing their experiences. Na'Lah wrote ***"I can honestly say that the Spectacles camp helped me interact with girls from different cultures and learn more about math and science. This program is a great preparation for girls who are considering entering in these fields.***

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For me this experience helped determine if I wanted to go to boarding school and gave me an idea of what it would be like.” Likewise, Akosua shares her experiences: ***“When we were there we saw part of Journey to the Center of the Earth in 4D. It was really fun, I got sprayed with water and it felt like stuff came up and touched my legs. Going to Georgia was the greatest experience I ever had. I am grateful to Girls Action Network® for giving me the opportunity to attend the Spectacles I camp.”***

In 2010, **GAN** added Wesleyan College to the GAN Summer Scholarship Enrichment Program partners joining Smith College's Summer Science and Engineering Program and Mount Holyoke's Summer Math Program, to provide scholarships for qualified **GAN** girl participants to attend the Spectacles programs. Wesleyan College is committed to academic excellence in the liberal arts, the fine arts, and professional fields of study and to close relationships among faculty and students.

GAN is a grassroots organization focused on social transformation to educate and empower young women in grades 7-12, with special emphasis on those from underserved communities. At the core of **GAN's** mission, the realization is that girls commonly are directed towards traditional careers, away from, for example, science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Reaching beyond single mentoring, **GAN Founder**, Elisa Basnight comments that "**GAN** strives to create a myriad of innovative programs and experiences, some in partnership with other not-for-profits and organizations, designed to show girls their expansive career and educational choices at a time when, research consistently shows that 'education for girls is one of the most effective – if not the most effective investment a nation can make to improve the health and prosperity of present and future generations.'" The 2010 GAN Summer Scholarship Enrichment Programming was made possible by the generous support of **Grant Goldsmith, President of Risk Overwatch, Inc.** The GAN Summer Scholarship Enrichment Program is led by the dedicated efforts of **Chairwoman, Dalila Springer**, with contributions from board members, **Charmaine Sibanda** and **Elisa M. Basnight**.

Please visit www.girlsactionnetwork.org.