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Theta Phi Alpha Fraternity Announces 2010 Siena Medalist Recipient



Bay Village, Ohio – Theta Phi Alpha Fraternity is proud to announce the 2010 Siena Medalist recipient Ms. Emily E. Douglas. The Siena Medal is given at convention to an outstanding woman to recognize her for her endurance and great accomplishment. Ms. Douglas is currently a project director for the Ohio based nonprofit Battelle for Kids. She earned her Bachelors in Political Science from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio and her Masters in Business Administration and Masters in Labor and Human Resources Management from the Ohio State University Fisher College of Business. Ms. Douglas has volunteered her time to help feed, clothe, care, and educate over 2.5 million individuals in the Appalachian region of the United States.

At the age of 11, Ms. Douglas founded Grandma's Gifts, a non-profit organization that works to provide goods, services, and opportunities to families and schools in Appalachia. Grandma's Gifts was inspired by Ms. Douglas's grandma Norma Belcher Ackison who was raised in poverty in Appalachia during the Depression with her 11 siblings and mother. Years later as a small business owner, Norma and her husband Odell made it a priority to give back to the community that helped her family years before. She often took Ms. Douglas along on those trips and shared stories her about growing up with little more than the dress she wore to school every day.

Norma was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1989 and passed in 1991. After losing her beloved grandmother, Ms. Douglas began to realize that poverty her grandma had described still existed in Appalachia some 60 years later. There were still children without shoes, schools without libraries, and families who went evenings without dinner. Ms. Douglas decided to help and Grandma's Gifts first project raised approximately \$450, which was used to adopt three Appalachian Ohio children for the Christmas holiday.

Seventeen years later, Grandma's Gifts has secured and distributed more than \$12.5 million in goods, opportunities, and services to the people of the Appalachian region in Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, and New York. While Ms. Douglas has a full-time 'paying job' still leads the organization with help from a host of loyal volunteers and donors from all over the world. Ms. Douglas has donated over 16,000 hours to ensure the success of Grandma's Gifts. She has also spoken to over 2 million people across the United States about Appalachia, poverty in the United States, education, and making a difference.

For more information about Grandma's Gifts visit <http://www.GrandmasGifts.org>. Ms. Douglas and family reside in Columbus, Ohio. She is an active member of Kappa Delta Sorority.

Founded in 1912, The Phi Alpha is a women's organization to provide close comradeship; to advance educational, social, and philanthropic interests and leadership training; to encourage spiritual development and adherence to the highest moral standards; and to promote lifelong bonds of friendship; a fraternity for college and university women and alumnae.