

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **GIRLS QUEST HONORS GRADUATING TEEN LEADERS FOR COMMITMENT AND SERVICE TO COMMUNITY**

Local organization recognizes young women for their positive contributions to the community at annual benefit

**New York, NY** –April 9, 2008- Girls Quest will honor four New York-area young women with the Teen Leader Recognition Award at its “April in Paris” Benefit on April 30, 2008. High school seniors and long-time Girls Quest participants Samantha Andino, Audra Clyburn, Lindsay Wangnoon, and Sherise Williams will receive the Teen Leader Recognition Awards for their service to the Girls Quest and NYC communities.

Audra, a South Ozone Park resident, is a senior at Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts and plans to attend the University of New Haven in the fall as a forensic science major. Samantha Andino, a Bushwick resident, is also a senior at LaGuardia High School and plans to major in Communications or Media and Broadcasting. Her long-term career goal is to be A&R Coordinator for a music label. Sherise Williams, a Harlem resident, is a senior at Mother Cabrini High School and plans to attend college in the fall and hopes to work in the health care sector after college. Lindsay Wangnoon, an East New York resident, is a senior at Brooklyn Academy of Science and plans to study veterinary medicine in college to become a veterinarian.

Despite the diversity of their backgrounds and interests, all of these young women share the experience of overcoming personal challenges, while providing service to their peers at Girls Quest and serving as a positive role model in their communities. “Each of these young women has inspired, mentored, and served as a resource to our younger girls and fellow Teen Leaders,” said Susan Hall, Executive Director of Girls Quest. “I am proud of their commitment to Girls Quest and their service to our young girls as both role models and leaders, exemplifying Girls Quest’s mission and values of creating opportunities for today’s girls to develop to their best potential.”

Samantha speaks for all of the Teen Leaders when she recently explained her involvement in the program. “I want to show the girls that they don’t have to follow a path of bad choices, but make good choices instead. Girls Quest inspires girls to make better choices, since they are introduced to a variety of new things to try and new people to meet that they wouldn’t have the opportunity to do at home.”

In addition to honoring these teens, Harold D. Elish, Board President Emeritus and Board Member of Girls Quest for over 15 years, will receive the Volunteer Recognition Award for his dedication and service in leading Girls Quest during the past decade through a period of change and transition. Mr. Elish, a graduate of Princeton University, is a Senior Vice President at UBS Financial Services.

Girls Quest’s “April in Paris” Benefit will be held on April 30, 2008 at the Prince George Ballroom, 15 East 27th Street. Diana Goldin and Maureen O’Gorman are serving as this year’s Honorary Co-Chairs. The benefit begins at 6:30 PM, and tickets are still available. All proceeds from the annual benefit directly support Girls Quest’s programs - Summer Experiential Education and Development (SEED) Program, Mentor Program, Teen Leadership Program, and Advancing Year-Round Engagement Program.

#### **About Girls Quest:**

Girls Quest is a 72-year-old youth development organization for girls ages 8-18, offering outdoor experiential education, literacy development, year-round mentoring, leadership training, and peer-to-peer role modeling.

Girls Quest’s mission is to nurture girls from low-income families in New York to help them achieve their full potential and become active members of their communities by building academic and social competence.

For more information about Girls Quest’s programs and girls, please visit <http://www.girlsquest.org>.

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