

Guardian Announces 2008 Girls Going Places(R) Entrepreneurship Award Winners

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NEW YORK, June 3 /PRNewswire/ -- The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America (Guardian) today announced the winners of its 2008 Girls Going Places(R) Entrepreneurship Award Program, a national competition that recognizes and rewards enterprising teen girls ages 12 to 18 who demonstrate exceptional entrepreneurship and community service. Fifteen winners were selected from more than 5,000 nominations across the country.

The national first place winner in the 2008 competition is Brandi Lynn Thomas, 16, from Covington, LA, who founded Ballroom by Brandi, a dance company that offers professional ballroom dance instruction and etiquette training for children and adults.

The national second and third place winners are Alaina (Lani) Lazzari, 14, from Pittsburgh, PA, who founded Simple Sugars(TM), a line of all-natural body scrubs and moisturizers, and **Dallas Jessup, 16, from Vancouver, WA, who established Just Yell Fire, a non-profit organization dedicated to keeping teen girls safe from abduction and assault.** Guardian granted the 15 girls a total of \$30,000 which they can use to reinvest in their entrepreneurial projects or save for college. The first, second and third place winners receive prizes of \$10,000, \$5,000 and \$3,000, respectively, and the 12 finalists are granted prizes of \$1,000 each.

"Now in our eighth year of the Girls Going Places program, we have had the privilege of meeting thousands of extraordinary young entrepreneurs and every year we are more impressed than the last," said Diana Acevedo, national manager, Girls Going Places, Guardian, New York. "These young enterprising nominees are truly an inspiration and an example for women in business of all ages."

The 12 finalists in the 2008 Girls Going Places(R) Entrepreneurship Award Program are:

-- Alexis Hanson, 14, Franklin, TX -- founder of Lines by Lexi, a line of custom-made crafted metal art. -- Kayleena (Kina) Tejada, 17, Surprise, AZ -- founder of A Touch of Art, a painting decorating business specializing in original murals and designs. -- Kelly Marie Chaffin, 18, Wheelersburg, OH -- founder and designer of Kelly Marie, a line of custom designed apparel. -- Amy Hinkle, 18, Belle Center, OH -- founder of Amy's Flowers a fresh flower business serving local Farmers Markets. -- Kelly Alexandra Stefanski, 12, McKinney, TX -- founder and designer of Kelly Alexandra Jewelry, a designer jewelry line. -- Jillian Ouellette, 17, Reno, NV -- founder of Bomber Dogs, a designer sneaker line. -- Alice Cash, 16, San Diego, CA -- founder of Broadway Kids of San Diego, a community theater company owned and operated by children. -- Amanda Martin, 17, Calabasas, CA -- founder of PickMe Jewelry, a line of unique accessories. -- Jolanda Burton, 17, Amite, LA -- founder of St. Helena Free Tax Center, a free tax center for elderly and low income members of the community. -- Iris Roberta Kokish, 17, Los Gatos, CA -- founder of the South Bay Chess Club, a chess club offering instruction, tutoring and tournaments for children and adults. -- Morgan O'Neill, 18, New Canaan, CT -- founder of Ribbons With Love, a line of high fashion women's belts benefiting the American Cancer Society's Making Strides for Breast Cancer Foundation. -- Naomi Hatton, 18, Kissimmee, FL -- founder of Hatton Photography, a business supplying original works for stock photography Web sites and art galleries.

Added Acevedo, "Girls Going Places showcases Guardian's commitment to the advancement of women in business at even the earliest age, and is one of the many programs we have in place to promote entrepreneurship and financial independence. We congratulate this year's winners on their extraordinary business accomplishments."

Guardian has brought Girls Going Places virtual allowing teen entrepreneurs and nominator's unlimited access to program news, highlights and video on some of the Web's best sites including YouTube, Facebook and MySpace (Key Word: Girls Going Places). Nomination forms, entry rules, prize information and frequently asked questions are available at the click of a mouse at <http://www.girlsgoingplaces.com/>.

About Guardian

Founded in 1860, The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America (Guardian), New York, NY is one of the largest mutual life insurance companies in the United States. As of December 31, 2007, Guardian and its subsidiaries had \$41.3 billion in assets (on a consolidated statutory basis). With close to 3,000 financial representatives and 80 agencies nationwide, Guardian and its subsidiaries protect individuals, small business owners, and their employees with life, disability, health, long-term care, and dental insurance products, and offer 401(k), annuities, and other financial products and trust services. Specializing in the small to mid-size business market, Guardian's Group business unit serves more than 120,000 employers, 6 million employees, and their families. More information about Guardian can be obtained at: <http://www.guardianlife.com/>.

The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America

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