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LOCAL NONPROFIT THANKS INDIVIDUALS FOR RECOGNIZING GOOD WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

**“iWitness Goodness” Contest on RecognizeGood.org Awards
Individuals With a Total of \$7,000 in Prizes**

AUSTIN, TX – Oct. 28, 2009—Local nonprofit, the Samaritan Counseling Center of Austin, recently rewarded three Austin individuals for recognizing good in the community. Amy Silvey, Eli Apolzon and Erin Jones each received prizes at the awards event on Wednesday at the Samaritan Center’s new offices.

The contest, called “iWitness Goodness,” began on August 18 and concluded on September 30, with one person randomly chosen as the grand prize winner. Amy Silvey, who works at the Capital Area Food Bank, received \$5,000 in prizes, including an iPhone, iPod Classic, MacBook Pro Computer and iTunes gift cards.

“My husband and I actually found out on our wedding anniversary that I won,” said Silvey. “He recently decided to go back to school, so we were going to have to buy a new computer. Winning the grand prize was a great anniversary gift, and now we can save that money for books and classes.”

In addition to the iPrize package, five judges reviewed 10 finalist video submissions and 15 finalist photo submissions. Tyler Seiswerda of KVUE, Paul Brown of News 8 Austin, Gustavo Monsante of KAKW, Leslie Rhode of KXAN and Mark Warren of KTBC individually ranked each eligible entry, and scores were totaled to determine the winners.

Eli Apolzon, winner of the video contest, submitted a video thanking his fellow members of Tarrytown United Methodist Church for raising money to buy a new wheelchair for Cody, a special needs youth at their church. Cody’s family could not afford the new wheelchair he badly needed, and with the church’s help, they were finally able to buy a new, custom-fitted wheelchair in which Cody is much more comfortable, as shown in the video. Apolzon took home a Sony HD Handycam® Camcorder through the iWitness Goodness promotion.

Erin Jones works at Communities in Schools and recognized Robyn, age seven, in her photo entry. The recognition explains that when Robyn went to get her back to school haircut, she was told she was only two inches away from cutting off enough hair to donate to Locks of Love. Without hesitation, Robyn chose to go the extra two inches so she could help someone else in need. In the winning photograph, Robyn displays her new short hairdo, and holds in her hand the 10-inch ponytail that will benefit someone else. Her submission earned Jones a Samsung DualView Camera.

“It’s great to see people embracing the significance of a thank you, and recognizing the small but powerful things that can make a difference in our community,” said Nancy Blaich, Executive Director of the Samaritan Center of Austin. “Each recognition posted on the site also benefitted local charities who serve Central Texas each day, which further pays it forward.”

Along with the three big winners on Wednesday, weekly drawings rewarded Julie Nelson, Sarah Sloan, John Dabbs, Anita Shuey, Carrie Lessing and Chris Dammert each with \$150 in gift cards provided by title sponsor H-E-B.

RecognizeGood.org is a public recognition forum where individuals can register and immediately start recognizing others for extraordinary acts of kindness, large or small. The contest took place in partnership with H-E-B, ABC Home & Commercial Services and HPI Real Estate & Investments.

About the Samaritan Counseling Center of Austin (www.samaritan-center.org)

The Samaritan Counseling Center is a nonprofit organization that has been saving lives, healing emotional wounds and giving hope to Central Texas families for more than 35 years. The nonprofit center offers a range of affordable and accessible counseling services from early childhood to elder years to prevent and treat abuse, develop healthy life skills and strengthen individuals and families. The Samaritan Center works with adults, couples, families, older adults, veterans, military families and the clergy. The Samaritan Center serves a 12-county region with locations in Central Austin, East Austin, Georgetown, Round Rock and San Marcos. It is affiliated with the Samaritan Institute of Denver as part of an international network of more than 500 counseling centers serving more than 35 states and Japan.