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Sylvia Allen Named “Outstanding Philanthropist of the Year” by the Association of Fundraising Professionals



(HOLMDEL, N. J. – May 19, 2011) -- With tears in her eyes and a standing ovation by an audience of 150, Holmdel businesswoman and founder of Sylvia’s Children, Sylvia Allen graciously accepted an award on Monday night as 2011’s Outstanding Philanthropist of the Year by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), at the Crystal Plaza in Livingston.

Allen was chosen as the recipient of this award because of her unwavering commitment to the over 1,000 children in Mbirizi, Uganda, and the African village’s Advanced Primary and Day Care School. Since founding Sylvia’s Children in 2003, Allen has undoubtedly made vast improvements to the infrastructure of the school, the economy of the village and the well-being of the children, one third of who are orphaned due to the AIDS pandemic.

Allen was nominated by Steven Le Vine, a close friend and former employee of Allen Consulting, Allen’s marketing firm. Formerly a resident of Freehold Boro, Le Vine, now of Hollywood, CA., was unable to attend, but had a letter presented to Sylvia in his honor.

“How does one summarize, or even describe Sylvia Allen?” the letter read. “One does not. Because there are not enough words in the English language to put into words how dynamic and inspirational an individual she is. Instead, she is described through smiles, tears and lots of heart. That is how she affects the world around her.

“It is my great honor to help present you with the recognition you so much deserve for the amazing work you do each and every day.”

“I was both humbled and honored by this award because it was offered by my peers. Of course, I was so nervous when accepting the speech I took my shoes off which brought some humor into the room,” stated Allen.

Since 2003, Sylvia’s Children has raised over \$400,000, all of which has gone directly to the school and its 1,001 children. It has built a well and a fully stocked library; purchased seven acres of land which it has used to build a corn milling business; donated Internet-equipped computers; constructed a dormitory with triple-decker bunk beds; built a playground; provided sporting and musical equipment; and built three additional double

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classroom blocks as well as providing a full-time nurse and new stoves for increased cooking efficiency.

It has also brought over a team of American doctors, nurses and dentists, all of whom have worked to treat and cure many of the children’s various ailments. Some have even saved lives of dying children.

The mission of Sylvia’s Children is to create a self-sustaining model in African entrepreneurship, based on Social Capitalism, which can then be provided to schools in surrounding villages. Allen’s near-future plans are to develop a chicken farm, a uniform sewing trade, an arts and crafts cooperative and a health clinic which will all allow the school to be completely self-sustainable.

“Sylvia’s philanthropic efforts exemplify the meaning of philanthropy,” said Dawn K. Knill, CFRE, the director of development for SAGE Eldercare. “She clearly demonstrates a high quality of leadership in fundraising. Her commitment to the advancement of philanthropy, along with her personal commitment of time, efforts and financial resources clearly illustrates her love of humankind.”

For more information on Sylvia Allen and Sylvia’s Children, visit www.sylviaschildren.org or call (732) 946-2711.

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SIDEBAR

Sylvia’s Children’s ‘Pods of Performance’



One ongoing fundraiser for Sylvia’s Children is a partnership with 11 participating Starbucks locations in New Jersey. During this ongoing clothing drive, the organization and coffee chain will accept all types of usable and wearable clothing for all seasons, including anything from shoes and handbags to shirts and dresses. It will also accept comforters, soft toys, small rugs and linens. Funds raised from this drive will be used to finance a desperately needed health clinic for

children at the Mbirizi Advanced Primary and Day Care School in Uganda. So far, over 17.5 tons of goods have been donated, and over \$5,000 has been raised for the school.

Participating locations include Middletown, Marlboro, Matawan, Manalapan, Edison, Union, Westfield, East Brunswick, New Brunswick, North Brunswick, and Piscataway. For a complete list of items accepted for donation, visit www.sylviaschildren.org.

PHOTO CAPTION: Sylvia Allen loads pod with bags donated to Starbucks locations.