



1724 Santa Clara Avenue ■ Alameda, CA 94501 ■ Tel: (510) 521-1743 ■ Fax: 510-521-4417 ■ Internet: <http://www.girlsincislandcity.org>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 7, 2006

Contact: Development and Communications
Director Kristin Butler, (510) 521-1743;
kbutler@girlsincislandcity.org

Three Local Girls Win College Scholarships From Girls Inc.

Three outstanding members of Girls Incorporated of the Island City's teen program in Alameda have won cash scholarships to college.

Sara Heaps, Nicole Oliver, and Natasha Walls are three of the 27 young women in the United States and Canada who won the merit-based scholarships from the national organization Girls Inc. this year.

The Girls Inc. National Scholars and Awards Program was created in 1992 when Lucile Miller Wright, a long-time supporter of Girls Inc., made a bequest from her estate to fund scholarships expressly for young women members. Since 1993, over \$1 million in scholarships have been awarded to high school women.

The goal of the scholarship program is to inspire outstanding young women to pursue secondary education and to give them access to a broad range of career possibilities. Application is open to young women who are in the 11th or 12th grade and who are members of a Girls Inc. affiliate.

All three local winners are founding members of *Blueprint*, a Girls Inc. social action program that focuses on teen issues such as teen dating violence, depression, and body image. Girls in *Blueprint* choose a topic that is relevant to teens, conduct research about it, and give presentations or lead activities to educate the community.

Sara Heaps, a senior at Encinal High School in Alameda, is one of only nine girls to win a \$15,000 scholarship from Girls Inc. this year. In addition to the work she has done in *Blueprint*, Sara has participated as a presenter at the organization's *Girls Take Charge Summit* and has been both an award-winner and an honorary chair at Girls Inc.'s annual *Women Who Dare Benefit*. Sara has also been class president for two years at her school, is a member of Encinal Leadership, started a recycling program, was on the varsity basketball team, and is an excellent student. She will attend Stanford University.

Nicole Oliver, a senior at Holy Names High School in Oakland, also won a \$15,000 scholarship. In addition to the work she has done in *Blueprint*, she has also participated as a presenter at the

The mission of Girls Incorporated of the Island City is to inspire all girls to be **strong, smart and bold**^(SM) through innovative programs, activities and advocacy.

organization's *GirlsTake Charge Summit*, speaking passionately about the problem of teen dating violence; was a part of the *FacilitatHER* program, facilitating activities for elementary school-aged girls; and participated in *Courageous Girls*, a program that allows girls to interact with women from the community and explore future career options. She is also a talented soccer player and an excellent student. Nicole is planning to attend UC Santa Cruz.

Natasha Walls, a senior at Alameda High School in Alameda, won a \$2,500 scholarship. In addition to the work she has done in *Blueprint*, she has also participated as a presenter at the organization's *Girls Take Charge Summit*, was a part of the *FacilitatHER* program; writes, edits, sells ads for, and promotes the teen "zine" *Out Loud: Thoughts of a Teenage Mind*; and was a finalist for the youth award at Girls Inc.'s *Women Who Dare Benefit* in 2005. Natasha is president of the Gay Straight Alliance at her school, is class vice president, has a part-time job at Tucker's Super Creamed Ice Cream, and is an excellent student. She was also recently featured as a "Wonder Girl" in Bay Area BusinessWoman News. Natasha is planning to attend Chabot College.

Girls Incorporated of the Island City is an affiliate of the national organization Girls Inc. Since 1964, Girls Incorporated of the Island City has provided the only program in Alameda designed specifically for girls at the Meyers Center, a girls membership program, where girls are challenged to explore science, math and computers, examine how money is earned and invested, and to ask questions about and take leadership roles in the world.

Girls Incorporated of the Island City also offers childcare for both girls and boys at seven elementary schools around Alameda, including Bay Farm, Earhart, Edison, Franklin, Lum, Otis, and Paden. For more information about Girls Inc., call (510) 521-1743 or visit our website at www.girlsincislandcity.org.

###