



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development

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USDA Rural Development Recognizes Cub Reporter

Morgantown, WV – July 7, 2010: USDA Rural Development recognized 13 year old Mikhaila Missimer, a resident of Oakland, Garrett County, Maryland, and a student at Southern Middle School. Mikhaila is the daughter of USDA Rural Development State Architect Chris Missimer and Lakeside Architect Shelly Missimer; she is the granddaughter of Nancy (a former USDA Rural Development employee) and David Thompson of Elkins, Randolph County, WV, and paternal grandparents Donald and Charlotte Missimer of Coatesville, PA. Mikhaila has one brother, 10 year old Peyton Missimer, a student at Broadford Elementary in Oakland, MD. Peyton assisted and supported his sister in her efforts and stated, “I am very proud of my sister and the job she has done.”

“On behalf of President Obama and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, I am pleased that Mikhaila volunteered to serve as a cub reporter for USDA Rural Development. Her reports have been outstanding and have allowed America to follow Raleigh County Public Library’s progress to ensure transparency and accountability,” said Bobby Lewis, West Virginia USDA Rural Development State Director.

A Certificate of Appreciation for serving as a cub reporter for the Raleigh County Public Library project was presented to Ms. Missimer today by Community Facilities Specialist and West Virginia USDA Rural Development’s Community Champion, Paula Moeller.

In October 2009, USDA Rural Development highlighted American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds that were utilized to provide funding to the Raleigh County Public Library project. President Obama signed the Recovery Act into law on February 17, 2009. It is designed to jumpstart the nation’s economy, create or save millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century.

As part of the President’s commitment to ensure public funds are expended responsibly and in a transparent manner, USDA Rural Development recruited volunteer cub reporters to report on community projects funded by USDA Rural Development. Mikhaila was the first cub reporter recruited by USDA in West Virginia. As a Recovery Act cub reporter,

Committed to the future of rural communities.

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students learn about important community projects, meet local community leaders and business people, increase their knowledge of government, gain journalism skills, and enhance their networking experience. Working with their teacher or counselor, the student may also gain credit for community service.

To view a sample of Mikhaila's blogs, visit

http://www.usda.gov/blog/usda/entry/h2_usda_rural_development_recovery.

Through its Rural Development mission area, USDA administers and manages more than 40 housing, business and community infrastructure and facility programs through a network of 6,100 employees located in the nation's capital and 500 state and local offices. These programs are designed to improve the economic stability of rural communities, businesses, residents, farmers, and ranchers and improve the quality of life in rural America. Rural Development has an existing portfolio of more than \$138 billion in loans and loan guarantees.

Rural Development serves as the lead Federal entity for rural development needs and administers program assistance through its housing, business/cooperative, community and infrastructure programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Further information on USDA Rural Development may be obtained by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>. In West Virginia, call 1-800-295-8228 to be put in touch with the appropriate personnel serving your county. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202.720.2600 (voice and TDD).

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