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State Board of Education Recognizes Students from Bordentown Regional High School

The State Board of Education today recognized two Bordentown Regional High School students for their leadership and involvement in community activities. The students, Blair Walker and Laura Gibbons, were particularly honored for their recent fund-raising efforts in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

"These trying times make special demands on our personal strength, courage and commitment to support our family, friends, neighbors and our nation," said Commissioner of Education Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr. "I want Blair Walker and Laura Gibbons to know how much we appreciate and admire what they have accomplished to assist rescue workers at Ground Zero."

"As co-chairs of their student government's fund-raising committee, Blair and Laura had already distinguished themselves as successful leaders of their school," said State Board President Maud Dahme. "Since, September 11, they have responded in an extraordinary way to raise funds and supplies to assist in the rescue and recovery efforts at the World Trade Center site.

"Their efforts symbolize the many acts of giving and kindness that students in New Jersey have performed since September," Dahme continued. "By their deeds, I am both convinced and comforted that our future will be in the hands of people who possess drive, character, and love of our country."

Laura and Blair had previously experienced success in community activities. As part of a fund-raising project last spring, they set a goal of filling 10 Easter baskets for the needy. When they completed this project, they had filled 100 baskets.

They have directed many other community activities within the Student Council, including working with senior citizens and fund-raising for an exchange program with students from Australia.

But after September 11, they intensified their fund-raising activities to help those affected by the tragedy. Within five days, they had raised \$3,000 from their school of 600 students. Later that month, when the Student Council received an urgent request from the Red Cross for medical supplies, underwear, socks, gloves and dog food, Blair and Laura spearheaded a drive that resulted in the collection of 6,000 pounds of supplies.

Also in September, the high school received a telephone call from the a local truck stop, requesting students to wash, fold and pack a truckload of laundry as soon as possible. Many students, including Laura and Blair, responded to this request, especially when they learned that they would be paid \$10 per hour.

After learning that the clothes belonged to the rescue workers at the World Trade Center, the students unanimously agreed to donate the \$890 they would have earned to relief efforts.

The State Board hosted Blair and Laura today as part of its new recognition program to honor each month a student or group of students for their accomplishments in community service, the arts, academics, sports, or other areas.