

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Headline: 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Philanthropy Essay Winner Announced

Sydney Willis, a student in Katie Mosley's class at Cloverdale Middle School, is the Grand Prize winner of the Putnam County Community Foundation's 2016 Darrell Wiatt Family Philanthropy Essay Contest. Willis' prize-winning essay described Rhonda McCammon, a radiology technician at Methodist Hospital, in Indianapolis, as being the philanthropist she admires most. In her essay, Willis explained that McCammon does an enormous amount of service for our community. She is a scorekeeper for basketball games at Cloverdale High School. She organizes car washes as fundraisers for church. She is a Sunday school teacher, Sunday school leader, Sunday school superintendent and a youth group advisor. She is in charge of Easter egg hunts, Veterans Day programs, and Christmas programs as well as organizing vacation bible school for the United Methodist Church. Willis concluded her essay by saying, "Rhonda McCammon to me is a hardworking, loving, caring, joyful, giving, fun to be around person." In recognition of Sydney's accomplishment, the Millgrove United Methodist Church Food Pantry, the charity of her choice, received a \$150 donation, and her school received a \$500 grant.

Entries were accepted from 7th grade students in all four Putnam County school corporations. Students were instructed to write a 500 word essay about "The Philanthropist I Know Personally and Admire The Most." Each school district selected the two best essays and submitted them to The Putnam County Community Foundation. Vivian Whitaker, Chair of the Essay Contest, stated that Essay Contest judges reside in all four school districts and evaluate essays with no knowledge of the identity of the schools, the philanthropists, or the students. Four finalists were chosen from the pool of essays.

Madison Aker, a student of Amanda Wells at South Putnam Jr/Sr High School, was a finalist for her essay recognizing her grandmother, Jane Walters. "She has gone on several mission trips... Recently she has started a prison ministry." Aker chose the Putnam County Emergency Food Pantry to receive her \$50 Finalist grant.

Sarah Jones, another student in Amana Wells' class at South Putnam Jr/Sr High School, wrote an essay about her sister, Rachel Jones. Her work at the Putnam County Humane Society, the Senior Citizen Prom, and the annual Special Olympics are examples of her kind, caring nature. "I am more than proud of my sister, who is only seventeen, for finding ways at such a young age to help others." Jones chose to designate her \$50 Finalist grant to the Putnam County Humane Society.

Kendall Faletic, also a student of Katie Mosley's at Cloverdale Middle School was a finalist for her essay highlighting the contributions of Becky and Gary Cunningham. As volunteers of the Owen County Humane Society, they not only care for the animals but take them home if there is not enough room for them and foster those who are sick. "They give their time, heart, and home because they are angels to these animals." Faletic chose the Putnam County Humane Society to receive a Finalist grant of \$50.

*The Darrell Wiatt Family Philanthropy Essay Contest is a program provided by the Putnam County Community Foundation. Through the program, the Community Foundation hopes to recognize a few of the everyday philanthropists in Putnam County and to ensure that no child will graduate from high school without knowing the meaning of the word "philanthropy." For additional information, visit [www.pcfoundation.org](http://www.pcfoundation.org) or contact Elaine Peck at 765.653. 4978.*

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