



Contact:
We Cancerve Movement
peoplewhocare@wecancerve.org
202.491.3586

For immediate release:
January 6, 2014

Abingdon Third Grader Named Seminary's Youngest Award Recipient

(Abingdon, Md.) – Grace E. G. Callwood, 9, was named the first young person to receive the “Making a Difference Award” from the Ecumenical Institute of Theology at St. Mary's Seminary. A surprised Callwood received the honors on January 4, 2014 at an event held at Mount Zion United Methodist Church in Baltimore.

The Ecumenical Institute's advancement committee identifies individuals and organizations who embody the Gospel value of service to the poor, personally presenting each with the “Making a Difference Award.”

Callwood was recognized for faith-led service projects she created and executed for homeless, foster and sick children throughout Harford County.

“I always knew that Grace was a special little girl, but I am exceedingly proud of the young world-changer she has become. Despite her own health challenges, she opens her heart to others in ways that are spiritually mature and youthfully authentic. Grace's witness is an example to every generation of the impact that one person can have on her community – no excuses,” said Rev. Wanda Bynum Duckett, pastor of Mount Zion United Methodist Church.

Callwood's service projects started in 2006, when she was two years old with a donation of a Radio Flyer wagon to the pediatric ward at Upper Chesapeake Memorial Hospital in Bel Air.

In 2007, she collected new toys to donate to Upper Chesapeake's pediatric ward. In 2008, she collected non-perishable food items in response to news stories about the dwindling supplies at the Maryland Food Bank.

“I think I made kids in the hospital feel good,” said Callwood as she reflected on her service projects. “I also think that I didn't do it all alone because my parents (helped me with the idea) and my friends are part of donating as well.”

“I feel bad for people and kids that can't eat. I also imagine how I feel when I can't eat and I'm on prednisone.”

Callwood has been on a steady regimen of steroids since October 2011, when she was diagnosed with stage IV Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma. Shortly thereafter, she learned that a pair of elementary-aged girls living at the Harford Family House was in need of clothing. Besides hunger, weight gain is often another side effect of steroids.

“I felt like I would never lose that weight and that I would become obese. I thought that I wouldn't have enough clothes to fit me. I was glad that other kids could get those clothes.”

She donated a number of brand-new back-to-school outfits to those two girls for Christmas.

Her efforts have since culminated to form the “We Cancerve” movement, an effort she created to mobilize ready resources and creative ideas to provide immediate help to homeless, sick and foster children.

In September 2012, Callwood hosted a lemonade sale in recognition of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month and National Lymphoma Awareness Month. She rallied support of neighborhood friends and raised \$633.32, which was split and donated evenly to the Casey Cares Foundation and Sinai Hospital-Baltimore.

Upon her return from her Make-A-Wish Trip to Walt Disney World in last January, Callwood donated large boxes of new toys and books to children residing at Harford Family House.

Last Easter, Callwood recruited her church’s youth ministry to help her donate 72 miniature Easter Baskets to children residing at Harford Family House.

Last summer, she hand-crafted 32 beaded key chains and collected hundreds of small toiletry items to create more than 50 personal care packets for girls residing at Arrow Christian Family Group Home, a transitional housing complex for female foster children who are preparing for emancipation.

Callwood recruited adults and children in her “Threads of Hope” initiative, which resulted in more than 50 back-to-school outfits (top, bottom and socks) donated to children residing at Harford Family House.

In 2013, she formalized her efforts as the “We Cancerve”, a movement that relies on faith-led upcycling and recycling. She recognizes that a lot of families have new, gently used goods and under-imagined treasures that could be put to good use for those less fortunate or those who could benefit from gifts and acts of kindness. She is in the process of naming a child-led board of advisors to showcase ways others can serve homeless, sick and foster children.

Callwood entered remission in November 2011. She completes chemotherapy on February 6, 2014. For more information, contact peoplewhocare@wecancerve.org.