

Reflections on D.C.

Written by Rachel E. Sheeley Staff Writer

Jan. 11, 2014 |

pal-item.com

Reflections on D.C.

Girls Inc. members proud of White House presentation



Girls Inc. of Wayne County members visited the White House during a memorable trip in 2013. Posing with White House executive pastry chef Bill Yosses, back row center, are front row from left, JaMarie Edwards, Becca Bailey, Naomi Carter, Hannah Stiffler, Micah Thomas and Olivia Carter. In the back row are Beth Harrick, co executive director of Girls Inc., and Susan Hively, a Girls Inc. volunteer. / Photo supplied

best friends,” said Girls Inc. member Micah Thomas. “To (have) this experience at such a young age ... It was a blessing. It really was.”

Thomas, Olivia Carter, Naomi Carter, Becca Bailey, Micah Thomas, JaMarie Edwards and Hannah Stiffler were invited to the White House by Sam Kass, who serves as the executive director of first lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move! program, which encourages healthy activities and eating for youth.

The six Richmond girls were joined on the trip to Washington, D.C., this past summer by Girls Inc. co-executive director Beth Harrick and volunteer Susan Hively. The trip was financed by a grant from the **Women’s Fund of the Wayne County Foundation**, donations and money raised by the girls through activities such as Lemonade Day.

Their journey to the White House began nearly a year ago when the Bold Girls, the oldest girls at the club in grades six to eight, began developing their own version of Let’s Move! as a leadership project at the Richmond organization’s Becky Rosa Center.

In February and March 2013, the girls led nutrition and education meetings at the club along with daily exercise sessions, including surprise dance sessions. They made a goal of completing 2,000 steps and kept track of the steps taken by the Strong girls, grades one and two, and the Smart girls, grades three through five. Each group exceeded the goal.

The start of a new year often brings reflection upon the past year, and when six members of Girls Inc. of Wayne County look back on 2013, they see themselves at the White House.

They see a photograph of themselves, along with two White House chefs, grinning as they hold one of the forms for the gingerbread White House that graces the president’s home during the holidays.

They remember walking in Michelle Obama’s vegetable garden and talking with Bill Yosses, executive pastry chef at the White House.

They feel a sense of pride in their accomplishments.

“It was just amazing to go, especially with some of my

They also encouraged healthier eating, keeping track of the fruits and vegetables club members consumed during the time period. At the end of the program, club members received T-shirts to remind them to be healthy. The shirts, designed by Olivia Carter, were paid for with a grant from Youth as Resources.