

## **PRESS RELEASE-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Circles of Mercy Honors Local Youth Volunteer with Award**



***Photo Caption (IMG 3439):***

***High School Student Somer Connolly (center) accepts the Sister Gail A. Reith, RSM Volunteer Service Award from Kathleen Pingelski (left), Board Chair and Richard Zazycki (right), Executive Director of Circles of Mercy, for her recent volunteer community projects in Rensselaer.***

Circles of Mercy and the Sisters of Mercy Northeast Community recently presented their annual **Sister Gail A. Rieth, RSM Volunteer Service Award** honoring local youth Somer Connolly for her volunteer work assisting at Circles of Mercy in Rensselaer.

Somer Connolly a 17 year old youth from Castleton, who just completed her senior year at Maple Hill High School. She was presented the Volunteer Award for her efforts over the past 3 years, working with the staff at Circles of Mercy and its thrift store Catherine's Closet. Somer coordinated 3 project community projects for kids sponsored by Circles, the Rensselaer Kiwanis and hosted at the Rensselaer Boys and Girls Club, with over 250 children reached by each of her projects. Somer is a rare type of individual who combines exceptional natural ability with a willingness and eagerness to learn and help others; especially women and children, literally touching hundreds and hundreds of children. Somer will attend The College of St. Rose this fall and is the daughter of Madeline and Paul Connolly. We are very happy to recognize her with our volunteer award and offer our congratulations.

The volunteer awards were presented during the "A Taste of Mercy" annual fund raising gala recently held to celebrate "Catherine's Circle of Friends" and to benefit Circles of Mercy. Circles is an out-reach center for those in need, sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy Northeast Community. It was established in 1997 in the City of Rensselaer and has a fifteen-year tradition of offering programs and services to provide hope, hospitality and empowerment to individuals in the Rensselaer Community.

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