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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Most Caring People in America  
Named**

*Caring Institute Names  
2006 Inductees to the Hall of Fame for Caring  
Americans*

Washington, DC – Robert J. Dole, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Caring Institute, today announced the winners of the 2006 National Caring Awards.

Seven remarkable adults and six youths will be honored during the National Caring Awards ceremony at 6:00 p.m. on October 17, 2006, in the Grand Ballroom of the Baltimore Convention Center.

"On behalf of our board of trustees, it is a great honor for us to pay tribute to these extraordinary people who have used their lives for the betterment of others. They are wonderful role models and the very personification of caring," said Senator Dole.

The Caring Institute's mission is to promote the values of caring, integrity, and public service. It was founded in 1985 by Val J. Halamandaris after a meeting with Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Mother Teresa suggested that there was a poverty of the spirit in the developed world which was much worse than the poverty of the body seen in

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the third world and asked Halamandaris to do something about it. Mother Teresa suggested identifying extraordinarily gifted people and holding them up as role models to be identified by others. The Caring Institute is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

The 2006 Annual Caring Award winners are:

#### Adult Caring Award Recipients

- Oral Lee Brown, an Oakland, California, real estate agent, knows the high cost of an education because she's sent dozens of students to college. The kids owe it all to a chance encounter that brought Oral Lee to one of Oakland's poorest primary schools. As she stood before the first-grade class, she made an impulsive promise to pay college tuition for any student who finished high school. She's used her limited income to keep that promise and raised \$1 million more to give three other classes a chance for college. The many kids she's "adopted" regard her fondly as a mentor, tutor, and second mom.
- Ben Carson is a pediatric brain surgeon with gifted hands and a giving heart. Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Children's Center, Dr. Carson can perform medical miracles, but he's done more than heal bodies. He's also founded Angels of the OR to sponsor care for needy patients, and he's set up a scholarship fund for top students in grades 4 through 12. It's how he thanks God for helping him rise from a violent inner-city teen to a world-famous physician. His experiences have inspired him to write several bestsellers that urge young people to study hard, help others, and hold on to their dreams.
- Reverend Billy Graham is a world-famous evangelist and central figure in the resurgence of U.S. Christianity after WWII. He has been a friend and advisor to several presidents, civil rights leader, and beacon of hope to millions of believers. His embrace of the mass media paved the way for a generation of evangelists. But he harnessed the power of TV and radio to convey a simple message of salvation. His place in the country's heart is summed up in the Gallup Poll, where he has appeared 49 times among the "Ten Most Admired Men in America."
- Eleanor Josaitis, a Detroit-area homemaker, responded to the Detroit riots of 1967 by seeking ways to ensure racial justice. This quest led her to found Focus: HOPE. As CEO, she has documented discrimination and run a massive food program for women, children, and seniors. More ambitious still are her programs to help people enter the mainstream. She has launched education and training programs in the areas of manufacturing, information technology, and engineering, as well as two basic skill courses that help students prepare for higher education. Her efforts have provided opportunities for thousands and made hope a reality in Detroit.
- Albert Lexie has used polish and persistence to raise \$110,000 for Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. He's been shining shoes at Children's since 1982 and accepting tips from customers



on behalf of "his kids," as he calls the patients. Charging \$3 per shine, he donates all tips to Children's Free Care Fund, which ensures all children receive medical care, regardless of a family's ability to pay. Albert's desire to help needy families has strengthened his arm and heart over the years. And he's still helping them, one shiny shoe at a time.

- Cal Ripken Jr. is a baseball great whose dad taught him to give his best both on and off the field. Now retired from the Major League, he's worked with the Baltimore community to support literacy, care for thyroid patients, and do research on ALS. He's also honored his father's memory through the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation, which provides baseball and softball programs to underprivileged kids, refurbishes fields, and donates sports equipment to schools. The foundation combines coaching with character building, so kids can hit home runs in baseball and in life.
- Jim Clifton and The Gallup Organization are being honored with a special award presented to the most caring corporation in America. Gallup sees its role as helping to preserve democracy. "If democracy is about the will of the people, some one should ask the public what it thinks," says Mr. Clifton. Gallup fiercely protects its integrity and independence, funding such polls itself. Mr. Clifton is very proud of the fact that no company resonates caring more than Gallup. Gallup sees it as the company's role to tell the 10 million people who run the world what the other 6 billion think—and that is what it believes is the single best thing that can be done to preserve world peace.

#### Young Adult Caring Award Recipients

- Brittany and Robbie Bergquist, ages 15 and 14, from Norwell, MA, founded Cell Phones for Soldiers to help U.S. troops stay in touch. They decided to support the war effort after hearing about the many soldiers who couldn't afford to call home. Their idea has inspired donations of cash, prepaid phone cards, and used cell phones that the kids recycle and sell to raise funds. So far, they've collected over \$1 million, sent over 80,000 calling cards to troops in the Middle East, and established over 8,000 recycling sites.
- Daniel Kent, age 17, from Carmel, IN, formed Senior Connects – now Net Literacy Corporation – to bring senior citizens into the computer age. While teaching a computer class for adults, he realized that many seniors found it hard to attend his sessions. He recruited and trained friends to help him teach Internet classes, built a website, and raised over \$110,000 for equipment. His efforts have put computer labs in 70 retirement facilities and helped 11,000 seniors get online.
- Clayton Lillard, age 17, from San Antonio, TX, loves to watch children's faces light up when they receive a bike. He's often seen that glow because he refurbishes used bikes for needy



children. His project began eight years ago when he spotted two used bikes in the trash and took them home to repair. Thanks to community support, he now has a yard full of used bikes and a corps of teenage volunteers. With the aid of this backyard crew, he's given wheels to more than 800 delighted kids.

- Jena Sims, age 17, from Winder, GA, is a former beauty queen whose inner beauty shows in her fight against cancer. Her commitment dates back to childhood, when she watched the disease take both her grandfathers. Since then, she has led 32 fundraisers and collected over \$69,000 for the American Cancer Society. After being crowned Miss Junior National Teenager, she wanted to share her triumph with young victims of cancer and other serious ailments. So she organized a Prince and Princess of Hope pageant that lets ill kids feel like they are winners too.
- Mattie Stepanek, posthumous, from Rockville, MD, was a best-selling poet, ambassador for peace, and moving voice for victims of muscular dystrophy. His own life-long battle against the disease sapped his body but not his soul. He served as National Ambassador for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, raised money for the hungry, and collaborated with Jimmy Carter on a book. In it, he pleaded for world peace and justice. Mattie found his own peace at the tender age of 14, but his spirit lives on in his wise and stirring *HeartSongs*. Mattie's mother, Jeni, will be accepting the award on his behalf.

The Caring Institute operates the Hall of Fame for Caring Americans, located in what was the first Washington, DC, home of the human rights advocate Frederick Douglass. Caring Award winners are inducted into this Hall of Fame, located three blocks east of the U.S. Capitol, at 320 A Street, NE, Washington, DC.

For more information, please contact Val Halamandaris or Rich Brennan at (202) 547-4273.

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