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**CONTACT:** Jodie Pozo-Olano  
Sequoia Public Relations for FLVS  
804-986-6911/ [Jodie@sequoiapr.com](mailto:Jodie@sequoiapr.com)

## **FLORIDA VIRTUAL SCHOOL STUDENT KELSEY TAINSH RECEIVED PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD**

**ORLANDO, FL, April 26, 2005** -- Kelsey Tainsh, a 9<sup>th</sup> grader enrolled in courses at Florida Virtual School, was honored by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation for her exemplary volunteer service with a President's Volunteer Service Award. The award, bestowed upon Americans of all ages who have volunteered significant amounts of their time to service their communities and their country, was presented by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. Ms. Kelsey Tainsh participated in the Spirit of Community program this year as a representative of Florida Virtual School in Orlando, Fla.

"We are thrilled Kelsey has been recognized for her commitment and dedication to the community," said Bruce Friend, Chief Administrative Officer, Florida Virtual School. "We applaud her for the courage she has displayed to not only overcome her illness, but also in retelling her experience for the benefit of others. It has been a pleasure and honor to support Kelsey in her efforts for this award and in growing academically. She is a true role model for other young people. "

For the past two year, Ms. Tainsh has volunteered her time and energy as the spokesperson for the "Stories of Light" campaign by the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Central Florida. A brain tumor survivor at the age of 6, Ms. Tainsh increased public awareness of the Make-A-Wish Foundation and helped raise \$250,000 to grant "Wishes" to other children with life threatening illnesses.

"I originally thought that the highlight of my life was having my own Wish granted but, I learned that helping make other children's Wishes happen is much more rewarding," said Kelsey Tainsh. "The one thing I would tell other young people is to open up your hearts and minds; find a project that means something to you and think big! Miracles can happen, one Wish at a time."

Sponsored by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), The Prudential Sprit of Community Awards program recognized young people across American for outstanding community service activities. More than 170,000 young people across American have been considered for these awards since the program began in 1995.

"All of these extraordinary young people exemplify the spirit of community that is so important to the future of our cities, towns and neighborhoods," said Art Ryan, Chairman and CEO of Prudential Financial. "By honoring them, we hope to not only give them the recognition they so richly deserve, but also to inspire others to follow their examples."

Program applications were distributed through all public and private middle and high schools, Girl Scout councils, county 4-H organizations, American Red Cross chapters, YMCA's, Camp

Fire USA councils and Volunteers Centers last September. After Local Honorees were named, state-level judges selected State honorees, Distinguished Finalists and Certificate of Excellence recipients. Volunteer activities were judged on criteria such as personal initiative, creativity, effort, impact and personal growth.

“We believe a thorough education includes many activities that occur outside the classroom,” said NASSP Executive Director Gerald Tirozzi. “We are proud of these students because they recognize how important it is to play an active role in their communities by using their skills and talents to benefit others.”

NASSP, based in Reston, Va, is the preeminent leadership organization representing the nation’s middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, and aspiring principals. Prudential, based in Newark, N.J., serves individual and institutional customers worldwide, offering a variety of products and services in the areas of insurance, investments, securities, banking and real estate.

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### **About Florida Virtual School**

Florida Virtual School (FLVS) is an established leader in developing and providing virtual K-12 education solutions to students throughout the country. Now a nationally recognized e-Learning model, FLVS began as a pilot project in 1997. At that time, FLVS began course development with limited enrollment, pioneering Florida’s first Internet-based, public high school—complete with online high school curriculum. In 2000, the Florida legislature established FLVS in state law as an independent educational entity with a gubernatorial appointed governing board. Today, FLVS serves schools across the nation, offering virtual education solutions for grades 6 to 12, as well as for adults seeking GED alternatives.