

2009

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Somerset Hills YMCA

VOLUNTEERS

SOMERSET HILLS YMCA

RECOGNITION NIGHT THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH

Somerset Hills YMCA, Basking Ridge

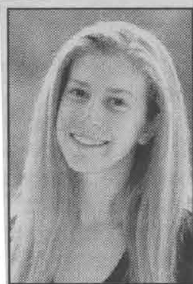
November 12, 2009

RECORDER COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

The Bernardsville News • Observer-Tribune • Echoes-Sentinel • Hunterdon Review

S.H.A.R.E.

Shannon McNamara of Basking Ridge is the founder of S.H.A.R.E. (Shannon's After-school Reading Exchange). She has traveled to Africa each summer to help teach the S.H.A.R.E. program to Tanzanian girls, ages 10-17.



**SHANNON
MCNAMARA**

During the school year she holds book and school supply drives. This year, along with 800 Basking Ridge student volunteers, they collected, sorted, labeled, and boxed 12,000 children's books to be shipped 10,000 miles to the S.H.A.R.E. rooms.

McNamara gives presentations to Scout, school, and community groups about the

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importance of helping girls her age in Africa and what life is like for the Tanzanian girls that S.H.A.R.E. helps.

McNamara is a junior at Ridge High School in Basking Ridge and she lives with her parents, Karen and Sean McNamara. She also has an older brother, Brendan, 22, and an older sister, Megan, 20. She has lived in Basking Ridge all her life.

Her volunteering and civic work began at an early age. She has been a Girl Scout for 12 years, is now a Senior Girl Scout and has earned her Gold Award. She participated in a 1-week mission trip, Youth Service Project (YSP) this summer with the Liberty Corner Presbyterian Church to help the disadvantaged by repairing homes in New York State. She taught English to poverty-stricken children in Peru, and Costa Rica in the summers of 2007 and 2006, with Cross Cultural Solutions, for one month. She was a Teacher's Assistant for vacation Bible School, one week, at the Liberty Corner Presbyterian Church.

McNamara volunteers because, she says, "A lesson that my parents have always taught me is to give back. Whether it is my community, or the community in Tanzania that I now help, I try to help people less fortunate than me because I know that all people are the same - despite where they were born. I volunteer because I know that I can make a difference in the lives of others through either a kind gesture or supporting word, and knowing that I can do that makes it something that I need to do."

Thank You Volunteers