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FOR RELEASE:

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Izza Haq Receives Community Service Award from Washington Township Elected Officials and Centerville High School National Honor Society

Izza Haq was one of two Centerville High School seniors honored Monday by Washington Township Trustees with the Township's annual Community Service Award. The award includes a \$1,000 scholarship with half of the scholarship funded by each of the four Washington Township elected officials and half funded by the Centerville High School National Honor Society, of which Izza is a member.

Izza's interest in volunteering had a natural start. "My faith plays a huge role in my decision to spend time giving back," says Izza. "I feel a sense of duty to stay civically engaged and make the world a better place for those around me." Izza is the co-president of the Centerville High School Muslim Student Association, where she makes cards and organizes an annual 'Friendsgiving' for local refugees, and participates in the school's Spirit Fest fundraiser. As an officer for the National Honor Society, she is a peer tutor, coordinates member service activities, and is the unofficial secretary and communication liaison.

Izza looks to her parents as role models for how individuals can make such a difference in the community. As her National Honor Society advisors, Ms. Kelly Korpusik and Mr. Ken Barrett say, "Izza understands something fundamental about the relationship between academics and service that NHS hopes to teach, which is that the realms of learning and service aren't separate silos. They should reinforce one another."

Perhaps the volunteer work that Izza is most passionate about is that which involves her Mosque Youth Board. As the current president and former public relations chair, Izza manages event planning for the youth at her mosque, volunteers at community events, mentors younger children, and helps advertise for events through social media. "My goal throughout high school has been to empower people across all backgrounds, especially within the Muslim community, by uniting them through events and volunteering", says Izza. "Most of my time as a volunteer has been spent reaching out to those who might not have a community around them by creating programs that enrich and develop the growing Muslim community in Dayton to become more involved and better represented."

In 2022, Izza spent a summer doing an internship at the Council of American Islamic Relations where she traveled to Washington D.C. and spoke with representatives about the importance of unifying Islamic youth in the United States. "At the heart of both Izza's learning and service is empathy," says Ms. Korpusik and Mr. Barrett. "She improves the lives of the people around her while learning and sharing their stories with others."

Outside of volunteering, Izza is in the Mass Communications block at Centerville High School where she studies and practices graphic design, content creation, writing and editing. After graduation, Izza plans to attend The Ohio State University and major in communications, public relations, and journalism.

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COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

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Izza's advice to others is a reminder of how important it is to get involved in whatever capacity possible. "Spend your time on what you know is going to make a difference for those around you and in your community. If you feel like you're not making a difference yet, don't get discouraged because you never know how you might have impacted someone's life."

Washington Township Trustees established the Community Service Award to recognize student volunteers and, in the process, draw attention to the importance of public service. Advisors for Centerville High School's four service organizations – Key Club, Octagon Club, Interact Club and National Honor Society – select two students who, through sustained effort, best exemplify service to the local, national or international community. Izza's award will be funded through a partnership between the four Washington Township elected officials – Trustee President Dale Berry, Trustee Vice-President Scott Paulson, Trustee Sharon Lowry, Fiscal Officer Gary Smiga - and the Centerville High School National Honor Society. "Our young people are a wonderful example to all of us. They give freely and willingly of their time and inspire us to become more involved. "Volunteerism is vitally important to creating and maintaining strong, vibrant communities and the Township hopes that by recognizing these students each year, we can continue to reward the investment that students are making in our community," says Trustee President Dale Berry.

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