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For Immediate Release

Eleanor Roosevelt Inspires Girls' Leadership Workshop at Val-Kill

Hyde Park, NY -- The Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill (ERVK) is hosting the second and final session of this year's prestigious Girls' Leadership Workshop (GLW) from Saturday, July 26 to Sunday, August 2, at Eleanor Roosevelt's historic home and retreat in Hyde Park, New York.

Now in its 11th year, The GLW sponsors two nine-day programs each summer to educate and empower up to 60 rising tenth and eleventh-grade girls from the United States and abroad. The primary objective of the program is to create a more just world by preparing young women for future positions of personal, political, and professional leadership, using the example set by Mrs. Roosevelt.

According to Kathleen Durham, interim executive director of ERVK, GLW sessions are designed to inspire the young leaders to "take a stand for human rights and social justice issues on a local and global level and, as a result, develop self-confidence, supportive relationships, knowledge and skill." Workshop topics include challenging bias, human rights and social justice activism, conflict resolution, public speaking, women in politics, international diplomacy and the legacy of Eleanor Roosevelt. Participants also enjoy many opportunities for creative expression and physical activity, as well as field trips to the United Nations and UNICEF in New York City, local historic sites and wilderness areas. The program, adds GLW Director Pamela Duke, "promotes leadership rooted in strength, courage, and compassion in alignment with the spirit of Eleanor Roosevelt at a critical period in their development, when many young women may otherwise become distracted or derailed by societal pressures, rigid gender-role expectations, and plummeting self-esteem."

Participants are drawn from public, parochial and independent schools and represent a variety of racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Those attending session two will reside at Marist College. The program is funded in part by both local and national foundations and corporations, including the Dyson Foundation and Best Buy, Eileen Fisher, Elias Foundation, and numerous other individual donors.

The second session's group of 28 participants, drawn from 10 states, Canada, Greece and Jordan, includes three young women from the Hudson Valley. They are: **Emma Driller-Colangelo**, Highland, from Poughkeepsie Day School; **Nava Silverstein**, Poughkeepsie, from Poughkeepsie High School; and **Maria Volpe-McDermott**, Loudonville, from Shaker High School. Local girls from the first session earlier this month, in residence on the Vassar College campus, included **Alexandra Fraenkel**, Rhinebeck, of Red Hook Central High School; **Gwenn Gideon**, Rhinebeck, of Rhinebeck High School; **Brenna McCaffrey**, Poughkeepsie, of Poughkeepsie High School; **Theresa McCartney**, Hopewell Junction, from John Jay High School; and **Olivia Stevens**, Newburgh of Our Lady of Lourdes High School.

To find out how to apply for the 2009 GLW sessions, call ERVK at 845-229-5302.
