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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

College Tour Turns Dreams into Reality for Milwaukee Teen

PEARLS for Teen Girls Opens Girls' Eyes to New Possibilities

MILWAUKEE (May 15, 2009) -- PEARLS for Teen Girls is getting ready to take 15 local teen girls on a one week tour of southern colleges from June 21 to June 26. The tour has become an annual event that has literally transformed the futures of dozens of Milwaukee's most at-risk African American and Latina teen girls in recent years.

La Tavia Patterson, currently a senior in Milwaukee, attended the College Tour in 2007 and fell in love with Benedict College, a historically Black college located in South Carolina. Recently, Patterson was accepted to Benedict and she will start as a Freshman there next fall.

"Before I became a PEARLS girl, I hardly dared to dream of college, let alone a prestigious private college in the south. But **PEARLS opened my eyes to the possibilities that are all around me and deep within me.** PEARLS showed me that I can dream big and be whatever I want to be," said Patterson.

"The College Tour is designed to give girls the vision, inspiration and confidence needed to vigorously pursue post-secondary education," said PEARLS Executive Director, Danae Davis. Too many young people in Milwaukee simply don't realize what kinds of opportunities exist for them. This College Tour offers them a vision of a broader world and the chance to see themselves succeeding in that world."

This year's tour includes planned stops at Grambling State, Xavier, Dillard, Jackson State, Mississippi Valley State University, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and Philander Smith College.

Girls raise funds to pay for a portion of the trip through car washes, a bowl-a-thon, other fundraisers, and personal contributions from friends and family. But to cover the full cost of the tour, PEARLS seeks the support of business sponsors and caring individual donors.

PEARLS for Teen Girls, Inc. is a leadership development organization serving at-risk girls ages 10 to 19 in Milwaukee. In 2008 PEARLS served 688 girls in Milwaukee.

To learn more about PEARLS visit www.pearlsforteengirls.com or call 414-265-7555.