

News Release



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®
The Voice For Real Estate®

500 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington DC 20001

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

For further information contact:
Sara Geimer, 312/329-8296
sgeimer@realtors.org

Sara Weis, 202/383-1013
sweis@realtors.org

Realtor® from Woodbury, Minn., Wins National Volunteer Award for Supporting Rights of People with Disabilities

CHICAGO (November 10, 2009) – Realtor® Cindy L. Johnson, a sales associate with Dona Christensen Realty in Woodbury, Minn., is one of five winners chosen by the National Association of Realtors® as a *REALTOR® Magazine* 2009 [Good Neighbor Awards](#) winner. Johnson was selected for her more than 20 years of volunteer work for The Arc of Minnesota, an organization that enhances opportunities for people with intellectual and other disabilities.

“Like many others, Realtors® are working harder than ever in this challenging economy, yet many of them, just like these Good Neighbor Awards winners, still find time to volunteer to help those in need,” said NAR President [Charles McMillan](#), a broker with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas. “Shining a spotlight on the Good Neighbor Awards winners will hopefully inspire others to volunteer and get more involved, which is so important to the quality of life in our communities.”

For more than 20 years, Johnson has been a volunteer advocate and lobbyist at the local, state, and national level for The Arc. Motivated by her own experience as the mother and sister of people with disabilities, her passion is to enable people to live, learn, work, and play in their own communities rather than be resigned to life in an institution.

Johnson’s daughter, Jenna, was born with cerebral palsy, and doctors told her that Jenna would never walk, hold a pencil, or talk. Remembering how her own mentally disabled sister had to leave home at age 13 to live in an institution, Johnson refused to give up hope. She sought support from her local chapter of The Arc of the United States, and succeeded. “Jenna was the first disabled child to be mainstreamed into our school district,” said Johnson.

Today, Jenna is 26 and lives assisted in an apartment attached to her parents’ home, sings with the church choir, works part time and has become a strong self-advocate – and Johnson remains active in The Arc. “I have found my voice and will continue to fight for the rights of those with disabilities,” Johnson said.

Johnson began her volunteer work in 1985 and was elected to the board of directors of the local chapter in 1989. From the beginning, Johnson’s interest was in advocacy and eventually, she was selected to chair the state governmental affairs committee.

-more-

#GN4

Realtor® from Woodbury, Minn., Wins National Volunteer Award – add 1

Johnson served at the state level for 10 years before moving on to the national board of directors. She's currently serving her second term on the national board and is co-chair of the public policy committee, where her work impacts 15 million people nationwide. "When my daughter looks at me and tells me I'm the best mom in the whole world, it's a wonderful feeling," she said. "Knowing that without my hard work she and others like her might not be living the quality life they deserve makes me certain I made the right choices."

Johnson and the other four Good Neighbor Award winners will each receive a \$10,000 grant for their charity, a \$1,500 Lowe's gift card and will be profiled in the November-December issue of [REALTOR® Magazine](#). The recipients will receive their awards on Saturday, Nov. 14, at the 2009 REALTORS® Conference & Expo in San Diego.

"The 2009 [REALTOR® Magazine](#) Good Neighbor Awards winners should take pride in knowing that they play such an important role in the lives of others. By stepping up to the plate to help individuals and organizations address their most challenging problems, they really are helping to make a difference," said NAR Vice President of Publications Pamela Geurds Kabati, [REALTOR® Magazine](#)'s editorial director.

Celebrating its 10th year, the Good Neighbor Awards has been awarded annually since 2000 and is presented by NAR's [REALTOR® Magazine](#). The Good Neighbor Awards is sponsored by eNeighborhoods, which has supported the program since its inception in 2000, as well as Homes.com, Lowe's and HouseLogic.

Nominees were judged on their personal contribution of time, as well as financial and material contributions to their cause. To be eligible, nominees had to be NAR members in good standing. More information about the Good Neighbor Awards winners, including a video, is available at www.realtor.org/gna.

***eNeighborhoods** (www.eneighborhoods.com) has been an NAR REALTOR Benefits® Program partner offering unique marketing solutions to Realtors® since 2002. As the nation's premier compiler of home and neighborhood information, this Dominion Enterprises company provides real estate professionals with a comprehensive set of marketing tools to deliver current and comprehensive information on local neighborhoods, demographics, schools and more.*

***Homes.com** (www.homes.com), a division of Dominion Enterprises, is a leading provider of real estate marketing and media services, including brand advertising, property listing exposure, website development, search engine marketing and lead generation solutions. More than 4 million homebuyers visit Homes.com each month to search more than 1.8 million homes for sale, and to locate top local real estate professionals.*

***Lowe's** (www.lowes.com) has been working with customers to maintain and improve their homes for more than 60 years. Lowe's is proud to help support the Good Neighbor Awards and similar community efforts through a partnership with Habitat for Humanity International and as underwriter for Habitat's Women Build program. In 2006 and 2007 Lowe's funded 52 Habitat builds nationwide. Lowe's remains dedicated to educating future homeowners through Lowe's Toolbox for Education program, which awarded \$5 million in grants to nearly 1,000 public schools nationwide. Lowe's and the National Association of Realtors® have partnered to bring Realtors® exclusive benefits to help build relationships with their customers, build referrals and build their client base. The benefits program is featured on www.LowesRealtorBenefits.com.*

***HouseLogic** (www.houselogic.com) is NAR's soon-to-be-launched consumer Web site. When it goes live on November 12, 2009, the site will help homeowners maintain, enhance, and protect the value of their homes and build vibrant communities.*

The National Association of Realtors®, "The Voice for Real Estate," is America's largest trade association, representing 1.2 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

###

Information about NAR is available at www.realtor.org.