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PRESS RELEASE

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Photos: Courtesy of Community Outreach Ministry

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My Story About Providing Backpacks and School Supplies to Children in Need

By: Tamika Burgess

I have known about Community Outreach Ministry for many years and have always loved the work Bob and Dr. Mona Salomo-Davies have done in the lives of children of incarcerated parents.

Education has been of great importance to me and the constant thing in my life that has taken me far beyond anything I could have ever imagined. This includes years of working towards and completing my most significant accomplishment to date, writing a book.

My debut as an author will happen next year with the release of *Sincerely Sicily* on January 3, 2023. The book is a captivating and empowering story about Sicily Jordan—a Black Panamanian fashionista who rocks her braids with pride—who learns to use her voice and take pride in who she is while confronting prejudice in the most unexpected of places.

I would have never written my book had I not been praying and seeking God’s will for my life. Along with that desire to follow God’s plan, it was in 2021 that He spoke to me about being a giver.

“She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.” Proverbs 31:20
With that verse in mind, in July of 2021, I reached out to Dr. Salomo-Davies with the desire to provide school supplies and backpacks to children in need. I felt that providing children with school supplies and backpacks for the upcoming school year was a great way to incorporate something I love, education, with meeting the needs of others. Making sure children were adequately prepared for school so they wouldn’t fall behind was also important because we were coming out of a worldwide pandemic.

In addition, it has been an honor to take some of the financial burdens off the caregivers of these children and play a role in setting up the children to have a successful school year.

I am thankful to Community Outreach Ministry for allowing me to do this for two years, and I am happy to honor God in this way.

Learn more about Tamika at her website: TamikaBurgess.com

Pre-order her book, *Sincerely Sicily*: <https://www.harpercollins.com/products/sincerely-sicily-tamika-burgess?variant=40333137313826>

Community Outreach Ministry is a volunteer-operated 501 C3 nonprofit Community Based Organization (CBO) serving at-risk kids in Southwest Riverside County ages 1-18. The

mission is to break the cycle of incarceration by giving at-risk kids a second chance to be winners and champions through year-round Outreach, Mentoring, Camping, and Christmas Programs. The students receiving backpacks and school supplies were from Murrieta, Wildomar, and Lake Elsinore. Students were thrilled to receive the exact school supplies they needed from Tamika Burgess.

We invite the community to join us at our Christmas Gift Baskets Fundraiser on Thursday, September 15, 2022, from 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm at the Downtown Murrieta Market Nights. Find us at the Chapel Coffee Campus, 24941 Washington Avenue. Proceeds benefit Christmas gifts that will be presented to local children at the 22nd Annual Angel Tree Christmas Party on Sunday December 11, 2022, at the Elks Lodge from 12:30 pm to 3:00 pm. Additional ways to support this year's 22nd Annual Angel Tree Christmas Party are to become an event sponsor, a collection site for gifts, or to donate hoodies for our teens. Your support makes it possible for these children to know they are still loved and cherished by their incarcerated parents. For details call (951)698-7650 or email us at info@communityoutreachministry.org.