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## When a Picture is Worth More Than a Thousand Words

*Sycamore employees help those in need through the power of photography*

December 12, 2009 - McHenry, MD: Sean McDonagh adjusts the settings on his Nikon camera while he and other Sycamore employees work to turn the Mountainside Community Center in McHenry, MD into a photo studio for the day. Their goal for the day was a simple one: 1. Find someone in need; 2. Take their portrait; 3. Print their portrait; 4. Deliver their portrait. But despite all of their preparations, there was no way to anticipate the joys and blessings that were about to take place.

On Saturday, photographers worldwide united in a debut event called Help-Portrait, organized to give back to the community through free portraits. With the help of the employees of 'A New U Salon and Day Spa,' who provided hair and makeup for the families, the day was about capturing a happy moment for a family in need, and preserving those smiles for them to share for years to come.

"We photographed about 15 families altogether, but there was one that definitely hit home to me," recalls Sycamore employee Janis Afable who participated in the event with her daughter. "There was one single mother who stood with tears in her eyes as we took photos of her daughter, and I couldn't help but feel that for that single moment while I was working, the mother was able to relax, maybe feeling that everything would be alright."

McDonagh echoes those sentiments, adding that he believed the real benefit to be giving a portrait to a family that had never had one before. "Your memory can't be as true to life as a photo," McDonagh said. "Especially when there are young children, it is great to be able to give them an image that they can hold on to."