

**May 6, 2008 - BRISTOL SHERIFF'S OFFICE ASSISTS WITH COLLEGE SENIOR PROJECT**



Arlesha Starkey and Randy Potter (Haven) unload donated clothing from the van.



L-R: Deputy Kevin France, Randy Potter, Arlesha Starkey and Georgiana Sluder (Haven Manager) with a bin of clothing that was donated by VI College students in the recent clothing drive.

In early March of this year, Arlesha Starkey, a senior at Virginia Intermont College in Bristol requested Sheriff's Office assistance about a project to complete her Social Work degree. Crime Prevention Officer Kevin France answered the call to Ms. Starkey. She stated that she felt a calling to provide blankets, comforters, and clothing to those in need.

Deputy France suggested to Ms. Starkey that she consider collecting clothes and other items for the Haven of Rest Ministries in Bristol. The Haven, a faith-based ministry that has served the Bristol area for many years, provides shelter to the homeless, a shelter for single mothers and their children, a half-way house and community re-entry program for those being released from jails and prisons, three meals daily for those in need, and services for those recovering from alcoholism and drug abuse.

The Sheriff's Office agreed to provide any support to Arlesha as she began her momentous task of setting up collection bins for the clothing and other needed items. On Monday, May 5, 2008, ten bags of clothing weighing at least 75 – 100 lbs. each were delivered to the Haven of Rest by the Sheriff's Office and Arlesha.

Haven clothing manager Georgeanna Sluder stated "We are extremely grateful for Arlesha's work in collecting much needed clothing for those we serve". She also added "today's donation was a blessing". Sheriff Jack Weisenburger stated "We are proud of Ms. Starkey's dedication and commitment to help those in need".

Arlesha Starkey graduated from Virginia Intermont on Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> with her degree in Social Work. She is planning on joining her family in Japan where her father is stationed with the United States Navy and continuing her post graduate education.