



Girl's invention wins award

By **Brittani Chavious**
Post staff reporter

Taylor Hernandez often watched as her little brother and sister played with blocks.

And just as often, she listened as her mother complained about the space the blocks took up.

What her mother saw as a problem, the Hartwell 10-year-old saw as an opportunity.

"I wondered how I could make the blocks a smaller size so they wouldn't take up so much storage," she said. "I tried to figure out a way that I could do that." What she came up with was Magic Sponge Blocks.

They would be sold in a plastic bag with a hole in it, to which a vacuum cleaner hose could be attached to remove the air from the bag, making it smaller.

The blocks also would have magnets in them, making it easier for children to build things with them. After hearing of her idea, Taylor's grandfather began to browse the Internet for invention contests and discovered the



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Taylor Hernandez, right, accepted her award from actor Cayden Boyd, his sister, Jenna, and Xerox's chief engineer Sophie Vanderbroek.

By Kids For Kids Xerox National Invention Competition. In October, Taylor entered, submitting her idea through the organization's Web site.

Taylor was notified that she had been named winner of a Chester Award, one of four grand prizes in the contest, which drew 2000 entries.

Taylor was in New York City Tuesday for presentation of her award at the International Licensing Show in New York City.

The award includes a licensing contract from By Kids For Kids, legal support to patent her invention, professional marketing expertise, a Xerox Phaser Printer and a limo ride.