

# The Birmingham News

## Tornado victim wins \$10,000 in savings bond contest

By Val Walton  
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Myra Jackson, center, is stunned after learning from Stephen Black, director of the University of Alabama's Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility, that she had won \$10,000. Kathy Newton, Hygia Health Services human resources director, holds her hand.

A Birmingham woman who lost her home in last spring's tornado outbreak won \$10,000 this afternoon for investing some of her 2010 income tax refund in a federal savings bond for her daughter.

Myra Jackson, 55, learned the news during a surprise presentation at Hygia Health Services, where she works.

Surrounded by her co-workers, Jackson sat stunned when she learned of the grand prize.

Trembling and in tears, Jackson said the money provides a "new start" for her family. Their apartment home on Cherry Avenue was destroyed in the April 27 tornado outbreak.

"We lost everything," Jackson said. "This is an answer to prayer. I am so shocked."

Jackson won the money in the SaveNow WinLater initiative through the University of Alabama Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility.

Families making less than \$50,000 a year with one or more children in the home, or less than \$25,000 annually without children are eligible to participate. For every \$50 they invest in a federal savings bond, they earn a chance to win the grand prize as, well as smaller monthly prizes.

The program works with Impact Alabama's free income tax preparation through the city of Birmingham.

Jackson, who got her taxes done at the Smithfield Library in the spring, said she never envisioned she would win when she invested \$50 in a bond for one of her daughters, Rochelle, now 20.

Jackson said she thought she had lost the savings bond when the tornado destroyed her apartment, but her husband, Barry, found it in the rubble. The couple has since moved to the Aspen Run apartments.

Jackson said rebounding from the tornado had been hard, but she was strengthened by her sister and co-workers.

Scott Comas, Hygia's owner, and his wife, Tracy, said it was hard to keep the secret from Jackson. The couple said Jackson, an 8-year employee, was deserving of the prize. They said she is an inspirational employee who has won many awards, including the "Build Us Up Award." "She makes us so much better," said Tracy Comas.