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SHOPA Kids in Need Foundation Proves Shining Example of Business Marketing to Strengthen Corporate Brand

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DAYTON, Ohio, May 17 /PRNewswire/ -- An all time high of 84 percent of Americans say they are likely to switch brands to support a worthy cause. Companies such as Staples, Coca-Cola and Target set themselves apart by aligning with brand strengthening charities, such as the SHOPA Kids In Need Foundation. According to brand experts, allocating funds and resources to a non-profit whose mission complements a corporation's own mission can have unparalleled effects on brand appeal to consumers and the company's overall image.

While also donating dollars, leading companies like Target and Office Depot donate product and discontinued stock to the Kids In Need Foundation, aiding the education of children who might not otherwise have supplies and supplying underfunded teachers with the materials to make their classrooms more imaginative places of learning. See www.kidsinneed.net for more information.

For example, Staples, in addition to providing generous financial support, donated nearly \$100,000 worth of school supplies to the Kids in Need program. The product was harvested from the Staples 2004 vendor show in Orlando, Fla., and was distributed to resource centers in Orlando and Fort Lauderdale.

"Kids in Need Resource Centers have a great track record of supplying teachers and students with the supplies they need to be successful," said Joy Errico, spokesperson for Staples Foundation for Learning. "Our continued support of this program is reflective of the exemplary work done by the SHOPA Foundation in helping low-income communities throughout the United States."

Corporate philanthropy has a significant and often unexpected effect on a company's human resource dynamic. The Cone Corporate Citizenship Study indicated that employees whose



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companies support social issues are 40 percent more likely to say they are proud of their company's values and nearly 25 percent more likely to be loyal to their employers. With such marked benefits associated with charitable initiatives, increasingly companies are taking on philanthropic projects that support corporate initiatives.

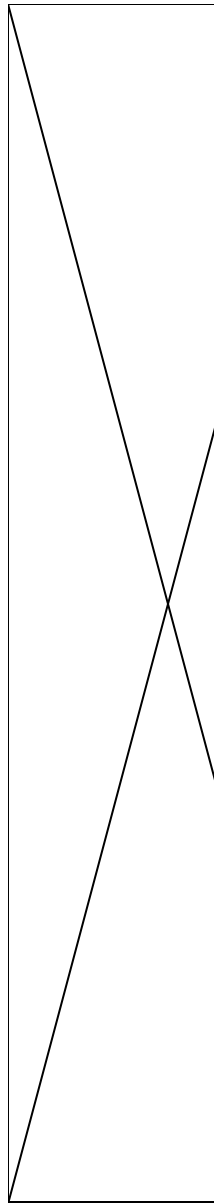
"Our corporate partners are the lifeblood of our organization, and we are honored to be able to work with such wonderful organizations who continue to find creative ways to assist the Kids in Need Foundation and ultimately, help those students to learn and to grow," Kids In Need Foundation director Scott Walters said. "Every child is a dreamer - they dream of growing up, going to college, starting a career. Education is the key, and it all starts with the right tools. The Kids In Need Foundation works with businesses to make sure students in need of school supplies have the right tools for the job. Together, we can make their dreams become reality and we encourage other like minded businesses to contact us and work with us for this most worthwhile endeavor - our children's educational future."

Jay Long, Public Affairs Manager at Coca-Cola Bottling Company of North Texas says, "Coca-Cola has a responsibility to today's youth. They are our future employees, and we have a responsibility to take care of the next generation. Coca-Cola Bottling Company of North Texas has an Employee Volunteer Council which is made up of hundreds of employees who give of their time at the Kids In Need resource center. Our employees get to directly see the impact of our efforts, and with our in-school programs we've created with the center, they can even see how kids are responding in school with their new supplies."

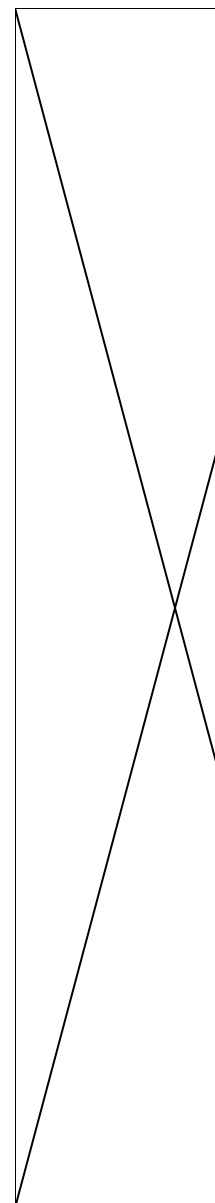
"Working with the Kids In Need Foundation has helped us to engage with other retailers to align to recognize the need and help the children in our community," continues Long. "SHOPA furnishes the only large-scale school supply program in North Texas, where the number of impoverished students is staggering. We are proud to partner with a foundation that is fully committed to helping teachers help students. We have to take care of our kids."

Tom Nutile, vice president of Public Relations for Staples echoes Long, adding, "Our mission at Staples is to serve our customers. We like to support those causes that not only do great things in our community, but also assist us in branding our company and aligning the good works that we do everyday - helping businesses to grow, helping teachers, helping students - and through the Kids In Need Foundation, we have found a real philanthropic partner. Together, we can make a positive impact in our communities."

Available Topic Expert(s): For information on the listed expert(s), click appropriate link. Jack Gordon
http://profnet.prnewswire.com/ud_public.jsp?userid=342885
SOURCE SHOPA Kids In Need Foundation -0- 05/17/2005 /NOTE TO EDITORS: Scott Walters, teachers, resource center administrators, brand experts available for interview. Photography available. Centers located in 21 DMAs nationwide: Seattle Los Angeles Phoenix Beaumont North Texas St. Louis Indianapolis Chicago Minneapolis Cleveland Detroit Cincinnati Atlanta Tampa Orlando South Florida Charlotte Washington, DC Scarborough New York Newark Additional Editorial Opportunities Resource Center Feature: Feature one of the twenty-one Kids in Need Resource Center across the country. We can identify a resource center with a compelling story relevant to your editorial goals, and highlight how



that center has made a difference in that city's school system even as the need continues to grow and the available donations get scarce. Charlotte: Classroom Central. The number of reading materials in a typical mid-to-high wealth household exceeds 100 books, magazines, and the like. The average low-income household has zero to 1 book or magazine. Classroom Central has been able to stock their store shelves with a plethora of books and magazines, new and gently used, to provide to students in need. Most books are for primary/beginning readers. One of the teachers who utilizes the centers teaches English as a Second Language. This teacher recently received a collection of alphabet books from Classroom Central for her 8th grade students. Although these books were well below the average 8th graders' reading level, they were a tremendous help to her ESL students. One student, Manuel, had recently moved to Charlotte from El Salvador. When he arrived, he didn't know a word of English. Slowly, with the use of the alphabet books, he learned one word, then two, then more. Now he is an honors student making A's and B's. He is serving as a peer counselor for other ESL students and plans to attend college to become a doctor or an engineer when he graduates. Tampa: A Gift for Teaching. One of the teachers who utilizes the resource center tells the story of her middle school student who, upon being passed a test to take, would scribble obscenities all over the paper. Sensing that the child's problem might be more than just anger, Ms. Balthazor took the child aside and handed him a Mead planner she had picked up at AGFT, so that he could record his study assignments and class schedule. This young man, who turned out to be experiencing incredible chaos at home, actually broke down into tears when he received such a thoughtful and caring gift from his teacher. The boy moved up from failing to earning A's and B's on his assignments and had a consistently better attitude from day to day, simply because he had tangible evidence of an adult's care for him and a tool with which to keep all of the new knowledge streaming into his brain organized. Phoenix: Treasures 4 Teachers. The Red Hat Society of Phoenix has created a nearly-nude calendar of its members for the past 2 years and sold it as a fundraiser for the center. Copies of this humorous calendar are available. Cincinnati: Crayons 2 Computers. Crayons 2 Computers created a landmark program with the Ohio Department of Corrections, called Crafts with Conviction. Inmates in Ohio prisons take excess donated materials and create learning tools and games, and send them back to the center in Cincinnati for teachers. Examples of these very creative projects are available. Charlotte: Classroom Central. The Carolina Panthers professional football team has been a major supporter of this center. The team provided much of the capital to open the center. The team partners with the center for a Fall supply drive each year incorporating the initiative with a game. The players also consistently attend all special functions for the center. North Texas: Kids In Need Teacher Resource Center. The Coca-Cola Bottling Company of North Texas has an Employee Volunteer Council which is made up of hundreds of employees who give of their time at the North Texas Kids In Need resource center. Coca-Cola also sponsors in-school programs that they've created with the center, where Coca-Cola employees can directly see the impact of their efforts, and see how kids are responding in school with their new supplies. Indianapolis: Teachers' Treasures. Experiencing trouble getting volunteers to staff the center during the school day, Teachers' Treasures partnered with local high schools for special needs students. These schools incorporated volunteer time at Teachers' Treasures into the curriculum for these students, helping them to learn job skills while also providing a great service to the center. Indianapolis: Teachers'



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Treasures. Time from the Heart is a program that this center has created, partnering with the Indiana Women's Prison where inmates make school supply products and learning tools from excess materials and ship them back to the center for teachers. The center also works with Pendleton Youth Corrections in Indianapolis, where 8-10 men from the center earn the privilege to volunteer at Teachers' Treasures each week. Scarborough: Ruth's Reusable Resources. This center is holding a fundraising auction in September called Have a Seat, where local Maine artists and school art teachers are revamping old wooden school furniture with the opportunity to use any of 3R's donated hands on materials. The pieces will then be auctioned off to benefit the center. Seattle: Kids In Need Resource Center. This center has a strong relationship with the Boeing Company. Boeing donated the center's second location. The resource center is also partially staffed by "Bluebills" members, Boeing's organization for retired employees. Executive Profile: Profile Scott Walters, Executive Director of the Kids in Need Foundation. With his two decades of non-profit experience, Walters has led the foundation to expand its initiatives, now serving 1.1 million students annually through the national network of resource centers and individualized programs that meet the needs of children in communities not served by resource centers. Corporate Philanthropy Profile: Many very high profile companies generously donate supplies and funding to the Kids in Need Foundation. Each company has a unique and compelling story in the kinds of products they donate, the way they include their employees in the philanthropy, and how they've helped students in their local community. Teacher Feature: Some of the most exciting stories about the Kids in Need Resource Centers come from the inventiveness of the teachers that utilize the programs. Scores of teachers have taken unconventional products that were donated to their local center and turned them into effective and innovative teaching tools. Excess bracelets from a beauty line became multiplication table tools. Ordinary plastic oil filters became the centerpiece of a science experiment. Profile some of these teachers and the imaginative ways they've recycled products to make unique tools for their students. Special Program Feature: Most Kids in Need Resource Centers around the country have special individualized programs. One partners with local special education programs to find special needs students who want to volunteer in the center and learn valuable job skills. Another center partners with the local prison system to get generous donations of learning tools crafted by inmates. We can detail these various programs and their successes. / CONTACT: Genevieve Miller, Account Executive of Justice & Young Public Relations, +1-513-388-4700 x 3015, or gmiller@jypublicrelations.com / Web site: http://www.kidsinneed.net / CO: SHOPA Kids In Need Foundation ST: Ohio IN: EDU ADV SU: NPT CHI SVY JJ-JK -- CLTUFNS1 -- 0818 05/17/2005 05:20 EDT http://www.prnewswire.com

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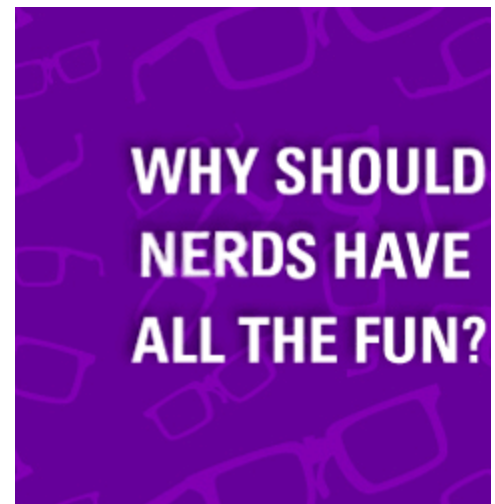
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