



SPREADING THE NEWS



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CONTACT: Jillian Metz, (727) 492.1213 jmetz@sufs.org

BJ's Wholesale Club Celebrated \$500,000 Contribution to Step Up For Students with a Holiday Food Drive at Tampa Bay Christian Academy

TAMPA —BJ's Wholesale Club celebrated its \$500,000 contribution that will provide more than 120 scholarships to economically disadvantaged students through the Step Up For Students Scholarship Program, an initiative of the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program.

In collaboration with Step Up For Students, BJ's hosted a "Choose to Give" food drive at scholarship-recipient school Tampa Bay Christian Academy (TBCA) in the Thanksgiving spirit of tradition and sharing.

During the "Choose to Give" event, America's Second Harvest of Tampa Bay was the recipient of more than 500 canned foods that were collected by students during a month-long food drive. BJ's Wholesale Club matched the generosity of the students by providing \$1,000 worth of food toward the drive.

"It is humbling to accept these donations on behalf of thousands of hungry families in the community who will now have a Thanksgiving dinner," said Wendy Zella, director of donor relations at America's Second Harvest of Tampa Bay. "My thanks are most certainly echoed by those who will get to enjoy the fruits of your generosity this holiday season."

Since BJ's opened its first club nearly 25 years ago, it has taken great pride in being a good corporate citizen. Its pride has been expressed in various community initiatives, including its support of Step Up For Students.

"BJ's Wholesale Club is committed to fighting hunger and bringing food to those 40,000 mouths that go hungry each day here in Tampa Bay," said Jessica Newman, manager of community relations for BJ's Wholesale Club. "We also have a long history of supporting education and are honored to be a part of a program that is changing the lives of so many children in Florida."

The support from BJ's and other corporate contributions allows Step Up For Students to provide annual private school tuition scholarships of up to \$3,950 or transportation scholarships of up to \$500 to out-of-district public schools for students whose families meet the federal guidelines for the free and reduced lunch program.

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"We are constantly humbled by the generosity of our corporate partners who are providing an equal opportunity to more than 26,000 of Florida's underprivileged children," said John Kirtley, founder and chairman of Step Up For Students. "We are grateful for BJ's in sharing our vision of providing children with educational options."

Currently, more than 2,200 low-income elementary and high school students in Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas counties are attending the school of their parents' choice through Step Up For Students Scholarships. Forty students at Tampa Bay Christian Academy are also benefitting from this innovative program.

About BJ's Wholesale Club

The company is dedicated to providing its members with high-quality, brand name food and merchandise at prices that are significantly lower than the prices found at supermarkets, supercenters, department stores, drug stores and specialty retail stores. BJ's offers low BJ's Member Pricing on a huge selection of groceries, top-brand apparel and accessories, small appliances, consumer electronics, fine jewelry, and other quality merchandise.

Headquartered in Natick, Massachusetts, BJ's Wholesale Club, Inc. is a leading operator of warehouse clubs in the eastern United States. The Company currently operates 185 clubs and 104 gas stations in 15 eastern states. Learn more about BJ's Wholesale Club or shop online at www.bjs.com.

Giving back has always been at the very core of BJ's culture. Through charitable giving, community relations programs and product donations, BJ's supports and enhances programs that provide vital services within each community we serve. In 2008, BJ's corporate commitment was evidenced by a \$600,000 donation from the Company's annual United Way of America ® Campaign, over \$460,000 in sponsorships of local programs and events and more than \$220,000 donated from BJ's clubs. For more information about BJ's corporate commitment to the community, please visit, www.bjs.com/about/community/.

About Step Up For Students

The Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program – also known as Step Up For Students – currently provides K-12 scholarships for more than 26,300 low-income Florida students to attend a private school or out-of-district public school. Step Up For Students Scholarships are funded by corporations that redirect up to 75 percent of their Florida corporate income tax liability or insurance premium tax liability to a qualified Scholarship Funding Organization in exchange for a dollar-for-dollar tax credit. For more information, visit www.stepupforstudents.org.

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