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CHICO'S CEO MENTORS STUDENTS THROUGH FASHION
~Step Up For Students' donor offers fun and education through creativity~



Fort Myers, FL, Tuesday, September 26, 2006 – Guided by Scott A. Edmonds, President and CEO of Chico's FAS Inc., a group of second grade students at Evangelical Christian School in Fort Myers played designers for a day as they created their own T-shirts based on their individual interests. Mr. Edmonds visited the school to show his company's continued support of Step Up For Students, an initiative of the Florida Corporate Tax Credit (CTC) Scholarship Program that provides K-12 scholarships for disadvantaged children to attend the public or private school that best meets their needs.

During the event, Evangelical Christian School's elementary school students, parents, and administrators shared breakfast in the school's cafeteria as Scott Edmonds spoke about the importance of education and encouraged the children to work hard in school and reach for their own goals. The children then gathered around Phillip Haines, Chico's CAD Manager, as he taught them how to design their own T-shirts using their individual creativity and kid-friendly paint.

"Chico's is committed to helping provide the best educational opportunities for the children in our community and we are delighted to participate in the Step Up For Students program," Mr. Edmonds stated. "Not only are taxpayers saving millions of dollars, but most importantly, families with limited incomes are finally being given the opportunity to choose a school that is best suited for their child's needs."

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Chico's Continues Support of SUFS/2

Step Up For Students is supported by corporate sponsors like Chico's, who make financial donations to the scholarship program to support quality education as the key to a full life and as an investment in a well-educated workforce. Under the Step Up For Students Corporate Tax Credit program, corporate sponsors like Chico's re-direct a portion of their state tax liability to scholarship funding organizations that award K-12 scholarships to low-income students. Chico's has been participating in the program since 2002, and has contributed \$3.5 million corporate tax dollars to fund 1,071 K-12 scholarships for low-income students, many of which are students from Evangelical Christian School and throughout the Fort Myers area.

"Our utmost appreciation goes to Chico's for their continued support of Florida's children," said John Kirtley, President of the Florida School Choice Fund and Step Up For Students. "The company's corporate tax credit dollars are enabling more than 1,000 disadvantaged children the opportunity for a brighter future."

Melanie Rogers, a mother of three children attending Evangelical Christian School, joined Scott Edmonds at the event to share her family's experience with the scholarship program. Two of her daughters are attending the school on Step Up For Students Scholarships from Florida P.R.I.D.E., the scholarship funding organization serving the West Central and South regions of Florida.

"Evangelical Christian School has given my children the education they need to succeed in life," Melanie Rogers said. "My heartfelt appreciation goes to Step Up For Students for making it possible for my children to attend this school, and to corporate donors, like Chico's, whose generosity makes all of this possible."

The Corporate Tax Credit program – also known as "Step Up For Students" – provides K-12 scholarships that will allow up to 20,000 low-income Florida students to attend a private school or out-of-district public school this school year. One hundred percent of corporate contributions go directly to funding scholarships – not a single penny can be used for administrative costs. The program currently serves more than 132 students in Lee County and has raised more than \$240 million since its launch five years ago. For more information, visit www.stepupforstudents.com.

Chico's FAS Inc. is a specialty retail clothing company headquartered in Fort Myers, FL., selling exclusively designed, private-label women's clothing and related accessories. The company operates 813 women's specialty stores, including stores in 47 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico operating under the Chico's, White House|Black Market, soma by Chico's, and Fitigues names. The company owns 510 Chico's front-line stores, 32 Chico's outlet stores, 213 White House|Black Market front-line stores, 11 White House|Black Market outlet stores, 23 soma by Chico's stores, 10 Fitigues front-line stores and 1 Fitigues outlet store; franchisees own and operate 13 Chico's stores. For more information, visit www.chicos.com.

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