

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KIDS IN NEED TEACHER GRANT APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE NATIONWIDE IN 2006

DAYTON, OHIO –March 27, 2006– Applications for the 2006 Kids In Need Teacher Grants will be available nationwide starting July 15. The program, sponsored by the School, Home, & Office Products Association (SHOPA) Kids In Need Foundation, with the participation of specific retail chains and education credit unions, has grants available to award to teachers for innovative classroom projects.

K-12 certified teachers of any subject from public, private, and parochial school systems are eligible to apply. Individual grant amounts are between \$100 and \$500. In 2005, the program awarded more than \$103,500 to 260 teachers.

National retail sponsors include Jo-Ann Stores, Inc., and Office Depot. Regional sponsors are Fred Meyer in the Northwest, Publix in the Southeast, and Sav-On Office Supplies in the Southwest.

The intent of the grants is to offer educators the opportunity to teach original, innovative projects for which no other funding is available. Applications, which can be accessed online after July 15 at www.kidsinneed.net and must be submitted no later than September 30, 2006. Teachers are also encouraged to explore the Kids In Need Web site to read guidelines and suggestions for filling out the Teacher Grant application and to utilize the lesson plans of previous years' winning projects.

SHOPA Kids In Need Foundation is a national non-profit organization providing school supplies to impoverished children and under-funded teachers. A 501(c)(3) charitable organization founded in 1995 by the School, Home, & Office Products Association (SHOPA), the Foundation's mission is to recognize, promote, and support initiatives that foster educational excellence. In addition to the Teacher Grants program, the National Network of Kids in Need Resource Centers includes 21 facilities that allow teachers from low-income schools to obtain free school supplies for their students. The SHOPA Kids in Need Foundation has distributed more than \$200 million in school supplies since its founding, directly

benefiting 1.3 million students and 75,000 teachers annually, and has awarded more than \$665,000 in grants to teachers. For more information, visit www.kidsinneed.net.

SHOPA, founded in 1991, is a nonprofit trade association representing nearly 1,000 manufacturers, manufacturer representatives, retailers, wholesalers, distributors, commercial/contract stationers, and service companies involved in the production, distribution, and sale of school supplies and office products. The Association also produces SBTS (SHOPA Buyer-to-Seller) Marketplace events, which facilitate pre-scheduled and one-on-one meetings. SHOPA, in cooperation with Messe Frankfurt and PROPAPER, is producing Paperworld USA in November, the international trade event for the school and office products industry. For more information, visit www.shopa.org.

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