



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kids In Need Foundation
Penny Hawk, Managing Director
937-297-2250, ext. 3023
pennyh@shopa.org

EDUCATION CELEBRATION BENEFITS NEEDY STUDENTS

DAYTON, OH -- AUGUST 23, 2007 -- According to the U.S. Department of Education, 12.5 million students, pre-kindergarten to 12th grade, currently are eligible to receive Title I funding, intended to children from low-income families achieve academic success.

The Kids in Need Foundation works hard throughout the year to ensure that children are prepared to learn and succeed by providing free school supplies nationally to students most in need. The Foundation has been on this mission since 1995, and many of the children the Kids in Need Foundation serves attend schools that receive funds from the federal Title I program.

To help the Foundation continue its important work throughout the year, a special "Education Celebration" Gala will be held on Friday, September 7, in Minneapolis, MN. Educator Erin Gruwell will join the celebration and share her inspiring message. All proceeds from the Gala benefit the Kids in Need Foundation.

Erin raises awareness by traveling nationwide to speak to large corporations, government institutions and community associations, and sharing her story about how her first teaching assignment in Long Beach, California changed her life and provided freedom to her students who felt captive to their racially divided urban community riddled with gang violence and drugs. Erin and her students captured their collective journey in *The Freedom Writers Diary - How a Teacher and 150 Teens Used Writing to Change Themselves and the World Around Them*. Ms. Gruwell's commitment to the future of children and education is also the subject of the film,

“Freedom Writers.” Today, Erin’s impact as a “teacher” extends well beyond the classroom. She currently serves as president of the Freedom Writers Foundation. For more information, visit freedomwritersfoundation.org.

“Education should be celebrated,” said Kathy Hirko, chair of the Kids in Need Foundation Board of Directors. “The Foundation does so every day by providing free school supplies to kids. We invite everyone to the Gala to help us acknowledge the importance of education and support us in our efforts.”

The Gala is sponsored by Target, national sponsor of the Kids In Need Foundation. Target is one of the foremost providers of funds to help advance the educational opportunities for children throughout America. Their charitable giving has helped make it possible for the Kids In Need Foundation to provide free school supplies to more than 1.5 million children and 100,000 teachers annually through a national network of Resource Centers. School supplies are provided at no charge to the teachers, the students, the schools or the school districts through these 23 Resource Centers. World Vision’s Teacher Resource Center is the Kids In Need National Network affiliate serving schools in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The Kids In Need Foundation will provide school supplies to its 10 millionth student during the 2007-2008 academic year. The Foundation encourages others who believe in the importance of quality education to support their cause by reserving a seat or table at the Gala, Friday, September 7, from 6:00 to 9:30 p.m. at The Depot. For more information, please call Penny Hawk at 937-297-2250 ext. 3023 or send her an email at pennyh@shopa.org. More information can also be found online at www.kidsinneed.net or by calling Dave Smith at 612-599-7877.

About Target

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About the Kids In Need Foundation

The Kids In Need Foundation is a national 501(c)(3) charitable organization founded in 1995 by the School, Home, & Office Products Association (SHOPA). The Foundation’s mission is to ensure that every child is

prepared to learn and succeed by providing free school supplies nationally to students most in need. The Kids In Need National Network of Resource Centers includes 23 facilities that allow teachers from low-income schools to obtain free school supplies for their students. In addition, Kids In Need Teacher Grants provide K-12 educators with funding to provide innovative learning opportunities for students. The Kids in Need Foundation has distributed more than \$250 million in school supplies since its founding, directly benefiting 1.5 million students and 100,000 teachers annually, and has awarded more than \$771,000 in grants to teachers. For more information, visit www.kidsinneed.net.

About SHOPA

SHOPA, founded in 1991, is a nonprofit trade association representing nearly 900 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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