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**OFFICE DEPOT FOUNDATION TO DONATE 7,000 BACKPACKS
TO HELP NEW ORLEANS CHILDREN SUCCEED IN SCHOOL**

*2009 National Backpack Program Celebrates 2 Millionth Backpack Milestone;
More Than 28,000 Backpacks Donated in Louisiana in Past Three Years*

New Orleans, La., July 24, 2009 – To help New Orleans-area children prepare for the new school year, the Office Depot Foundation announced today that it will donate more than 7,000 backpacks to the Recovery School District (RSD), St. Tammany Parish School District and St. Bernard Parish School District during an event in Metairie on July 28. The Foundation will also make a financial contribution to the Jefferson Parish Public School District.

The donations will be made during a special “Back-to-School Backpack Celebration” beginning at 2 p.m. at the Office Depot store located at 3526 Veterans Memorial Highway in Metairie. Special guests scheduled to attend include Recovery School District Superintendent Paul Vallas; State Sen. Jack Donahue; State Rep. Nita Hutter; Laverne Saulny, Regional Manager for Sen. Mary Landrieu; Maura Donahue, Vice President of Business Development, DonahueFavret Contractors; and Alex Lewis III, Interim Managing Director of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce.

This year, the Foundation is marking an extraordinary milestone as it donates its *two millionth backpack* since the inception of the National Backpack Program in 2001. “The Foundation believes strongly that we are helping children to build self-confidence, boost self-esteem and achieve greater success in the classroom – all as a result of being well-prepared for school,” states Foundation President Mary Wong, who will participate in the New Orleans event. “We are extremely pleased to be able to donate our two millionth backpack at a time when so many children and families are dealing with the impact of the economic downturn.”

Wong notes that the Office Depot Foundation has donated more than 28,000 backpacks in New Orleans and Louisiana in the past three years alone. “We continue to be staunchly committed to helping this very special region recover and rebuild from Hurricane Katrina – as well as Hurricane Gustav,” she says.



While the scale of the Office Depot Foundation National Backpack Program is global, it makes a difference on an individual level for every child it reaches. "This extraordinary effort by the Office Depot Foundation has helped so many of our children hit the ground running with the materials they need to be ready to learn," says RSD Superintendent Paul Vallas. "The gift of a brand new backpack and school supplies has also helped our families that might not have had the money to purchase backpacks and all of the supplies their children need. We've seen the pride on the faces of students who've received their new backpacks, and we're confident that the backpacks and supplies have boosted their self esteem."

To distribute the backpacks, the Foundation is hosting 25 "Back-to-School Backpack Celebrations" in cities across the United States and Canada – five of which feature special appearances by Tony Stewart, driver of the No. 14 Office Depot®/Old Spice Chevrolet Impala SS in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series. Thousands of backpacks also are being donated by Office Depot stores in hundreds of local communities and in collaboration with the Office Depot Business Solutions Division in selected cities.

Thousands more are being distributed through the Office Depot Foundation's partnerships with eight national non-profit organizations – including the Tony Stewart Foundation, the National Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Association, City Year, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), Feed The Children, the Kids In Need Foundation, Nourish America and the National Foundation for Women Legislators, whose members will give backpacks to children in all 50 states. For the second consecutive year, backpack donations will be made to children of the Navajo Nation in Arizona and the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota.

To learn more about the Office Depot Foundation National Backpack Program, please visit www.officedepotfoundation.org or the "Two Million Backpacks" page on Facebook.

About the Office Depot Foundation

The Office Depot Foundation is an independent foundation (tax exempt under IRC Sec. 501(c)(3)) that serves as the independent charitable giving arm of Office Depot, Inc. In keeping with its mission, Listen Learn Care®, the Foundation supports a variety of programs that help children succeed in school and in life; enable civil society (non-profit) organizations to become more efficient and effective; help people and businesses prepare for disasters, then recover and rebuild afterwards; strengthen local communities through grants, product donations and volunteerism; and encourage community development through entrepreneurship and economic innovation. For more information, visit www.officedepotfoundation.org.

