

Office Depot Foundation Helps Children and Families Affected by Memorial Day Floods by Donating 2,000 Sackpicks to Greater Houston Storm Recovery Network

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Collaborative Efforts Facilitated by Feed the Children

HOUSTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Aug. 14, 2015-- When 11 inches of rain drenched the Greater Houston area over Memorial Day weekend, more than 12,000 homes and businesses were damaged – and countless children and families were affected.

To help some of these children start the new school year on the right foot, the [Office Depot Foundation](#) donated 2,000 colorful new sackpicks containing essential school supplies to the Greater Houston Storm Recovery Network – a collaboration of nonprofit, faith-based, local, state and national organizations that are working together to share information and resources to assist with recovery and rebuilding. The Foundation – the independent charitable giving arm of Office Depot® (NASDAQ:ODP) – announced the donations during a special Back-to-School Celebration at a Houston Office Depot store.

The Greater Houston Storm Recovery Network will distribute the sackpicks to children living in neighborhoods that were affected by the flooding. “These new sackpicks and the supplies they contain will be a valuable resource for children and families who are still feeling the impact of the floods,” said Lynae Novominsky, Vice-Chair of the Network and Volunteer Services Coordinator for Jewish Family Service of Houston. “Based upon past experience, recovery of many of these residents is expected to take from nine to 18 months, if not more.”

The Office Depot Foundation is making the donations during the 15th year of its award-winning National Backpack Program. By the end of this year, Office Depot and the Office Depot Foundation will have given away more than 3.7 million backpacks and sackpicks since the National Backpack Program began in 2001. In total, the Foundation donated 5,000 sackpicks to Houston-area schools, nonprofit organizations and government agencies this week.

“We believe that every child should have the opportunity to go to school with dignity and hope,” said Office Depot Foundation President Mary Wong. “These sackpicks and school supplies help to level the playing field.”

“At the same time, this donation supports the Office Depot Foundation’s commitment to helping communities recover and rebuild after natural disasters,” Wong continued. “We are proud to support the work of the Greater Houston Storm Recovery Network as it continues to help residents of this community get back on their feet.”

The Office Depot Foundation also is supporting recovery and rebuilding efforts in Houston through its sponsorship of the National Disaster Help Desk for Business, a 24-hour toll-free hotline managed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s Center for Corporate Citizenship. Businesses and nonprofit organizations can access resources and expert guidance by calling 1-888-MY-BIZ-HELP or (888) 692-4943.

The collaboration between the Office Depot Foundation and the Greater Houston Storm Recovery Network was suggested by Feed the Children, an Oklahoma City-based nonprofit organization that worked with numerous agencies in the Houston area to provide relief following the floods. “At Feed the Children we believe in championing partnerships,” said Travis Arnold, Interim President and CEO. “We know that when we unite together with other nonprofits we will have a greater impact. That is why we were excited to connect the Office Depot Foundation with the Greater Houston Storm Recovery Network and help serve these families that were impacted by the flooding.”

More information about the National Backpack Program can be found on the Office Depot Foundation’s Facebook page at www.facebook.com/officedepotfoundation. To learn more about the Office Depot Foundation and its initiatives, go to www.officedepotfoundation.org/.

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 give children tools to succeed in school and in life; build the capacity of nonprofit organizations through collaboration and innovation; and help communities prepare for disasters, as well as recovering and rebuilding afterwards. For more information, visit www.officedepotfoundation.org.

About the Greater Houston Storm Recovery Network

The Greater Houston Storm Recovery Network (the "Network") is a collaborative of local 501(c)(3) agencies formed as a Long-Term Recovery Committee in response to the Memorial Day flooding in the Greater Houston area. The Network is pleased that it is able to start its distribution of early donations to help children start the school year off with supplies and uniforms and will be providing more resources to those families in need via its case management agencies. For more information about how to receive services, volunteer or donate, visit www.houstonfloodrecovery.org.

About Feed the Children

Feed the Children believes that it can create a world where no child goes to bed hungry. Since 1979, Feed the Children has grown into one of the largest U.S.-based charities. It is accredited by GuideStar Exchange and the BBB Wise Giving Alliance, maintain a 3-star rating from Charity Navigator, and is also a member of InterAction. Through its network agencies, Feed the Children distributed over \$344 million in food, other necessities, educational supplies and medicine, impacting close to nine million individuals in the U.S. and over 4.9 million individuals globally, in fiscal year 2014.

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