

La Petite Academy shoots to raise \$10 million by 2010: Early Education Provider begins third year as a Make-A-Wish® corporate sponsor

CHICAGO, February 6, 2006 - On the heels of its most successful fundraising year for the Make-A-Wish Foundation®, La Petite Academy set its sights on raising a total of \$10 million by the end of 2010.

This February marks La Petite Academy's third year as a corporate supporter of the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Over the past two years through the generosity of La Petite Academy's children, parents and associates the company has donated more than \$2.23 million, primarily by hosting fundraising events twice a year at every Academy nationwide.

"There is no greater inspiration than empowering children to help other children," said Gary Graves, President and CEO of La Petite Academy.

When academies raised record amounts of money during the Fall festival, and separately associates contributed money for people displaced from Hurricane Katrina, Graves said he thought they could shoot even higher.

"When tragedy struck, we could have easily abandoned our commitment to the Make-A-Wish Foundation and focused on the people who were displaced by Hurricane Katrina," Graves said. "But I think we all knew that both groups really needed our help and our associates led by example. First, they involved their families and communities in their Fall festivals, and second they reached into their own pocketbooks, like so many other Americans, and contributed thousands of dollars toward the relief effort for the people displaced by Hurricane Katrina," La Petite Academy matched the employees generosity and donated a total of \$15,770 to the American Red Cross on behalf of its 12,000 associates.

"Our children and families have embraced a cause that we believe in - helping other kids," said Graves, who serves on the Make-A-Wish Foundation national board of directors. La Petite Academy takes its philanthropic commitment even further by incorporating it into an innovative curriculum that teaches children the importance of generosity, kindness and community involvement. Unlike any other national child care provider, La Petite Academy offers a "Kids of Character" curriculum that includes monthly activities specifically designed to build a sense of community and caring among children.

"As we enter into our third year supporting the Make-A-Wish Foundation, I am confident the kindness and generosity of our children, parents and staff will continue to grow. At the rate we're going, I see no reason why we can't make our goal of raising \$10 million by 2010," said Graves.

"We appreciate the tremendous support and generosity from La Petite Academy's children, parents and associates, which has enabled us to grant the heartfelt wishes of

nearly 400 children nationwide so far,” said David Williams, Make-A-Wish Foundation of America president and chief executive officer. “With Gary leading the way, I believe without a doubt that La Petite Academy will reach its truly impressive goal.”

La Petite Academy, Inc. is one of the nation’s largest privately held educational child care companies with academies in 36 states and the District of Columbia. Headquartered in Chicago, La Petite Academy offers a range of educational and care programs for children of all ages: from infants to toddlers, two year olds to preschoolers, and kindergartners to school-age kids who come to La Petite Academy before and after school. The company offers an unparalleled preschool curriculum that sets higher standards for educating young children, investing more than \$1.9 million in books and new materials and nearly 20,000 hours of teacher training. For additional information, visit www.lapetite.com.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy. Born in 1980 when a group of caring individuals helped a young boy fulfill his dream of becoming a police officer, the Foundation is now the largest wish-granting charity in the world, with 71 chapters in the U.S. and its territories. With the help of generous donors and nearly 25,000 volunteers, the Make-A-Wish Foundation grants more than 12,500 wishes a year and has granted more than 135,000 wishes in the U.S. since inception. For more information about the Make-A-Wish Foundation, visit www.wish.org.

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