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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***got breakfast?*® Foundation Announces Silent Hero Grant Winners**

Woodbury, NY, February 9, 2010 – The *got breakfast?*® Foundation this week awarded eight school districts with its Silent Hero grants that recognize, encourage and reward those silent heroes who help children by participating in the national School Breakfast Program. The Foundation received many applications representing school districts from 33 different states requesting more than \$2 million in funding. The winners were each awarded a grant ranging from \$2,500 to \$10,000. The funds can be used as needed – for example, to purchase serving equipment, additional staffing, and the development of nutrition education materials.

“The response was overwhelming,” says Sonya Kaster, R.D., L.D.N., S.N.S., Grant Administrator for the Silent Hero Program. “The amount of creativity to provide school breakfasts to students was encouraging news for the future of the School Breakfast Program. The entrants really thought ‘outside the box’ when it came to developing strategies for feeding our school children.”

The eight Silent Hero Grant recipients are:

- Pajaro Valley Unified School District – Watsonville, CA
- Anne Arundel Public Schools – Annapolis, MD
- San Diego Unified School District – San Diego, CA
- Woodrow Wilson Elementary/Binghamton Schools – Binghamton, NY
- Hawkins Mill Elementary/Memphis City Schools – Memphis, TN
- Apollo and East End Middle School/Metro Nashville Public Schools – Nashville, TN
- IDEA Public Schools – Weslaco, TX
- Clint Independent School District – El Paso, TX

Grant recipient Gary Petill, Food Services Director for the San Diego Unified School District, said they will use their grant award to purchase equipment needed for their Breakfast in the Classroom program and expand this successful existing program to additional schools in their district. “The grant money will help us implement Breakfast in the Classroom in three of our schools where 90-98% of our students are eligible

for free and reduced-price meals -- where nutritious breakfast foods in their homes may be scarce,” said Petill. They have already prepared its Breakfast in the Classroom Training Manual that includes materials for every step of the process, such as a video, PowerPoint, in-service programs, Plans for a Clean Classroom -- even breakfast sheriff badges for students.

Most of the Silent Hero grant winners will be implementing breakfast in the classroom. According to the Food Research and Action Center’s *School Breakfast Scorecard* for 2008-2009, districts using breakfast in the classroom have the highest participation rates. They also identified adopting universal classroom breakfast programs as a key strategy for urban school districts, especially those with high percentages of low-income students.

The Silent Hero Grant Program was created to encourage schools and non-profit organizations to expand the reach of underutilized child nutrition programs, most notably the School Breakfast Program. While 19 million low income children participate in the National School Lunch Program each day, only 9 million participate in the School Breakfast Program.

Whether the reasons for not eating breakfast are financial issues or lifestyle issues, research has shown that hungry children don’t learn. Children who eat breakfast do better in school.

“We launched the Silent Hero Grant Program in the hopes of it acting as a catalyst for schools to give classroom and/or alternate site breakfast a try,” says Kaster. “I think the number of proposals we received is indicative of the untapped potential that can make a difference in the lives of hungry school children.”

The *got breakfast?*® Foundation will soon be announcing a Summer Meals Grant Program that will support breakfast programs during the summer months.

For information about the *got breakfast?* Silent Hero Grant Program contact info@gotbreakfast.org or visit the www.gotbreakfast.org website.

Source: *got breakfast?* Foundation