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## **The Dollar General Literacy Foundation and General Mills Give Free Books to New Orleans Children**

*Donation to Reading Is Fundamental and Communities In Schools supports local literacy programs for children*

**New Orleans, LA— May 28, 2009** — The Dollar General Literacy Foundation and General Mills' *Cheerios Spoonfuls of Stories* have teamed up to support Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) programs in 20 communities across the country. The Dollar General Literacy Foundation is donating \$100,000 and Cheerios is donating 100,000 books to support this program. The New Orleans RIF program, facilitated by Communities In Schools, received \$5,000 and 5,000 books to fund local literacy programs for children and families.

"The Dollar General Literacy Foundation is committed to opening doors to literacy for people of all ages, and providing children with the tools they need to develop literacy skills is a key initiative for us," said Denine Torr, Director of Community Initiatives, Dollar General. "By supporting RIF's local literacy initiatives for children, we hope to foster a love of reading and learning among children and give them a gift that will serve them well for the rest of their lives."

Local elementary school children will receive books for a variety of ages. Some are bilingual. Sample book titles include, "Monkey and Me" by Emily Gravett, "Romeo and Lou Blast Off" by Derek Anderson and "Giggle, Giggle, Quack" by Doreen Cronin.

"Fostering and encouraging literacy among children is a core commitment of Cheerios," said Jaci Vossen, Customer Promotions Manager at General Mills. "Just as Cheerios cereal helps fuel kids to start the day, reading gives them the power to succeed in life. For the last seven years, through our Spoonfuls of Stories campaign, we're thrilled to have distributed over 30 million books. General Mills serves up the same level of passion for this cause as the Dollar General Literacy Foundation does, and we're looking forward to putting many more books in the hands of kids who are hungry for education."



### **About Dollar General**

Dollar General is a leading discount retailer with more than 8,300 neighborhood stores. Dollar General stores provide convenience and value to customers by offering consumable basic items such as food, snacks, health and beauty aids and cleaning supplies, as well as basic apparel, house wares and seasonal items at everyday low prices. The company has a longstanding tradition of supporting literacy and education. Since its inception in 1993, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation has awarded more than \$27.6 million in grants to nonprofit organizations, helping more than 1.5 million individuals take their first steps toward literacy, a general education diploma or English proficiency. To learn more about Dollar General, visit [www.dollargeneral.com](http://www.dollargeneral.com).

### **About General Mills**

One of the world's leading food companies, General Mills operates in over 100 countries and markets more than 100 consumer brands, including Cheerios, Häagen-Dazs, Nature Valley, Betty Crocker, Pillsbury, Green Giant, Old El Paso, Progresso, Cascadian Farm, Muir Glen, and more. Headquartered in Minneapolis, Minn., General Mills had fiscal 2008 global net sales of \$14.9 billion, including the company's \$1.2 billion proportionate share of joint venture net sales.

### **About Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.**

(RIF), founded in 1966, motivates children to read by working with them, their parents, and community members to make reading a fun and beneficial part of everyday life. RIF's highest priority is reaching underserved children from birth to age 8. Through community volunteers in every state and U.S. territory, RIF provides 4.5 million children with 16 million new, free books and literacy resources each year. For more information and to access reading resources, visit RIF's website at [www.rif.org](http://www.rif.org).

### **About Communities In Schools of New Orleans, Inc.**

CIS New Orleans is an affiliate of Communities In Schools, Inc., the nation's fifth largest youth serving organization and the largest focused solely on dropout prevention and improving graduation rates. The mission of Communities In Schools is to champion the connection of needed community resources with schools to help young people successfully learn, stay in school and prepare for life. By bringing caring adults into the schools to address children's unmet needs, CIS provides the link between educators and the community. The result: teachers are free to teach and students- many in jeopardy of dropping out- have the opportunity to focus on learning. For more information about CIS New Orleans, visit [www.CISNewOrleans.org](http://www.CISNewOrleans.org).

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