

Contact:
Lisa Coe
Vista Communications
847-526-2045

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**IDEA Public Schools in Weslaco, Texas, Awarded Silent Hero Grant
from *got breakfast?*® Foundation**

Woodbury, NY, March 10, 2010 – The *got breakfast?*® Foundation last month awarded IDEA Public Schools, located in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, one of eight Silent Hero grants that recognize, encourage, and reward those silent heroes who help children by participating in the national School Breakfast Program. The nearly \$10,000 award will be used to implement classroom breakfasts as a means to provide a free school breakfast program for all of its 5,493 students on six campuses.

A charter school group, the IDEA Public Schools district is committed to student wellness. In January 2010, they began to offer a universal breakfast program on their campuses to provide a healthy breakfast to all students at no charge, regardless of income.

“We will offer breakfast in the classroom for the younger students and in the hallways of the school (instead of in the cafeteria) for the older students before school begins – hoping that this structure will encourage more students to participate,” says grant recipient Ashley Dickerson, Wellness Coordinator for IDEA Public Schools.

“The grant money will help us purchase breakfast kiosks -- carts with separate compartments to keep foods warm or cold depending on the daily menu,” says Dickerson. “We also plan to devote time and money to marketing the universal breakfast program. We want to

provide nutrition education to students and families about the importance of eating a healthy breakfast each day.”

The marketing outreach includes several components designed to raise awareness, including banners, newsletters for parents, and participation incentives for students. The district has already prepared large banners that will hang outside each school to advertise the fact that IDEA now provides “Free Breakfast For ALL Students Every Day!”

“We were impressed by the commitment of IDEA to the School Breakfast Program and their willingness to include *all* children, since all students benefit from eating breakfast each day,” says Sonya Kaster, R.D., L.D.N., S.N.S., Grant Administrator for the Silent Hero Program. “Feeding younger kids breakfast in the classroom and older kids in the hallway is a great way to demonstrate that alternate site feeding can be the answer to implementing a district-wide breakfast program.”

All eight 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.

The *got breakfast?* 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 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.

‘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 also recently announced 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