



CONTACT:

Bruce Serbin
Serbin Media for Office Depot Foundation
(954) 821-3434
bruce@serbinmedia.com

Penney Berryman
Communications Director, Wonders & Worries
(512) 329-5757, Ext. 202
penney@wondersandworries.org

WONDERS & WORRIES RECEIVES 150 SACKPACKS FROM OFFICE DEPOT FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN NEEDING SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Award-Winning Program Makes a Difference to 4 Million Kids since 2001

AUSTIN, TEXAS, AUGUST 8, 2017 – For most children, the first day of school is an exciting time complete with new clothes and back-to-school gear. But for kids in families where money is tight, the experience can be just the opposite.

Wonders & Worries executive director, **Alex Gabbi**, knows how common this is. “In addition to coping with the worry brought about by a serious illness, parents must often also cope with either reduced income or job loss when they can no longer work. For many Wonders & Worries families – 80% of whom have a cancer diagnosis – their illness means that they don’t have extra resources to buy the required school supplies for their children.”

To make a difference to children like these at the start of the new school year, the Office Depot Foundation donated colorful new backpacks containing essential school supplies to several Austin organizations, schools and agencies, including 150 to Wonders & Worries. This is the first year that these donations have been made in Austin.

Nicole Halder, director of outreach at Wonders & Worries, and former teacher herself, attended the Office Depot Foundation event with two of her daughters. “Each year, Wonders & Worries collects and distributes backpacks and school supplies to client families in need,” Halder said. “Because of Office Depot Foundation, we can help even more children reach their full potential this academic year.”

The specially designed, drawstring-style backpacks come in seven bright and fun colors. Each one includes a zippered pouch containing a pen, pencil, pencil sharpener, eraser, six-inch ruler and four crayons. The backpacks do not have any Office Depot Foundation or Office Depot logos or markings.

“It is our mission to make sure that every child has the right tools to achieve success in school,” said **Mary Wong**, president of the Office Depot Foundation. “School is challenging enough on its own, and when you’re unable to come prepared with the basic essentials for learning, it’s nearly impossible. We want to give every kid a fair chance.”

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 Wonders & Worries

Wonders & Worries is an Austin-based nonprofit that ensures children and teens can reach their full potential despite a parent's serious illness. Since 2001, Wonders & Worries has provided professional support to more than 7,000 Central Texas family members during a parent's illness. Programs are offered at no cost to families in English and Spanish. Wonders & Worries is the only organization of its kind in the US. Learn more at wondersandworries.org.

About the Office Depot Foundation

The Office Depot Foundation is an independent foundation – tax exempt under IRC Sec. 501(c)(3). 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.

###