

PR – Helping Kids Shine Grants – Orange County

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., March 28, 2006 – From teaching teen girls character development, volunteerism and healthy decision-making, 25 non-profit organizations that serve Orange County are planning to spread some magic and make dreams come true with the help of *Disney's Helping Kids Shine* Grants. The recipients of the 2006 grants were announced today in front of CinderellaCastle at MagicKingdom

 In total, Walt Disney World Co. awarded more than \$700,000 in grants to 38 Central Florida non-profit organizations. The grants were awarded to organizations whose efforts are grounded in one or more of the four platforms identified by *DisneyHand-Helping Kids Shine* to build better futures for children: connecting with adults, constructive use of free time, character development and compassion.

“It is a privilege for Walt Disney World to support our community organizations that demonstrate such a deep dedication to improving the lives of children in Central Florida,” said Diane Ledger, director of Community Relations for Walt Disney World Co.

Two organizations that serve OrangeCounty received awards named for former Disney executives who have made significant contributions to the community.

The *Bob Allen Outstanding Community Service Award* honors the late Bob Allen, who started his career at Disneyland in 1955 and ended his tenure with a decade-long stint as vice president of Walt Disney World Resort. After his death in 1987, Allen's family formed an endowment fund that assists local social service, environmental and humanitarian organizations. This year, the Florida Senior Programs, Inc. (foster Grandparent Program of Central Florida) received a \$60,000 grant, which will be used to recruit and train foster grandparents to work with pre-school age children.

The *Dianna Morgan Children's Champion Award* is in honor of Dianna Morgan, a children's advocate who forged relationships among Disney, community members and leaders throughout Florida during her 30-year career with the company. This \$48,800 award was presented to The Orlando Science Center to fund their apprenticeship program.

Other recipients serving OrangeCounty include:

- BETA Center, Inc. – \$37,000
- Justice and Peace Office, Inc. – \$37,500
- Office for Farmworker Ministry – \$35,000
- People's Theatre, Inc. – \$25,200
- Freedom Ride, Inc. – \$24,100
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Florida – \$20,000
- CrealdéSchool of Art – \$28,100
- MicheLee Puppets, Inc. – \$20,000
- Planned Parenthood of Greater Orlando, Inc. – \$20,000

- OrangeCounty Healthy Start Coalition, Inc. – \$19,500
- The Center for Drug-Free Living, Inc. – \$19,500
- Jewish Community Center of Greater Orlando – \$15,000
- Kappa Alpha Psi – Winter Park Chapter – \$12,500
- Orlando Neighborhood Improvement Corporation – \$12,200
- Children’s Home Society of Florida Central Florida Division – \$10,400
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Florida, Inc. – \$10,000
- Florida Children’s Repertory Theatre, Inc. – \$10,000
- Hispanic Resource Link, Inc. “Yo Si Puedo” Program – \$10,000
- Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra, Inc. – \$10,000
- Screen Actors Guild Foundation, Book PALS – \$10,000
- Shepherd’s Promise – \$10,000
- The Epilepsy Association of Central Florida, Inc. – \$10,000
- CommunityServiceCenter of South Orange County, Inc. – \$7,500

Each year, Walt Disney World Co. mails grant applications to non-profit organizations throughout Central Florida. This year, the company received 168 applications. The grant recipients were chosen by a panel of judges made of up Central Florida community leaders and Walt Disney World Cast Members.

Formerly known as the Community Service Awards, the program was renamed in 2002 to reflect the company’s community focus on building better futures for children. Since 1972, Walt Disney World Co. has awarded more than \$8 million to benefit local non-profit organizations through the program.

In 2005 alone, Walt Disney World Resort donated \$23.2 million in cash and in-kind support to the community. Walt Disney World Cast Members also volunteered more than 203,198 hours to benefit local non-profit organizations.

