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**The Box Project Puts Sponsors at Top of Holiday Wish List,
Offers Chance to Help America's Poorest Families**

ORMOND BEACH, Fla. (Sept. 2006) – In advance of the coming holiday season, The Box Project has begun its annual **Holiday Match Program** and is in need of sponsors to help many of the 37 million Americans now living in poverty. Based on The Box Project's innovative, year-round giving program, the Holiday Match Program matches carefully screened families in need with sponsors who provide a vital supply of material and emotional support for the holiday season. The Box Project waiting list has more than 250 families living in poverty in rural areas of the United States such as the Mississippi Delta, Maine, Appalachia, and the native American reservations in South Dakota. Waiting families have been pre-qualified for assistance but are waiting for a sponsor.

"Many of our sponsors use the Holiday Match Program as a way to break through all the holiday hype and demonstrate to their children the real difference between necessity and luxury," said Susan Patneau, Executive Director of The Box Project. "There are few better ways or any better time to teach such a lasting lesson on the value of unselfish giving, and that's something we can all use."

The Box Project, a nonprofit organization, has been using its unique giving model for more than 44 years in an ongoing effort to break the cycle of poverty, and help alleviate the suffering it causes. Sponsors who participate in The Box Project's ongoing effort make a commitment to send a box of supplies once a month, the specific contents of which are determined by written communication between the sponsor and their match family. The Holiday Match Program provides the opportunity for families, businesses, and individuals to become sponsors just for the holiday season.

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According to Patneau, once they submit an application and are matched with one of the Box Project families, Holiday Sponsors are asked to send a box of gifts that includes at least one new gift for each family member. There is no required amount to spend, so sponsors can work within their own budgets. Family sponsors can request a match family with children similar in age to their own, which gives all the children a unique opportunity to learn about different cultures, geography and lifestyles. Children can also get involved with the project by sending personalized greetings to the family members, and by helping select and wrap gifts.

In addition to Holiday Sponsors, The Box Project needs volunteers to support their various Community Centers. Volunteers are matched with one center and are asked to send boxes of needed supplies for distribution to individuals in the community as local needs arise.

The Box Project is also accepting contribution to The Box Project Holiday Fund, which is used to directly assist families on the waiting list, or match families with special needs, during the holidays.

“Many families in poverty have difficulty just paying the bills each month, let alone trying to provide any special festivities for the holidays. For them, our Holiday Match Program makes a huge difference,” added Patneau.

The deadline for 2006 Holiday Match applications is November 1. There is a registration fee of \$50 for new holiday sponsors and \$35 for returning Holiday Sponsors and current Family Sponsors who would like a Holiday Match. More information and registration forms are available online at www.boxproject.org/forms.html.

Founded in 1962, The Box Project, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization with headquarters in Central Florida. Working to help Americans living in areas with the highest rates of rural poverty, The Box Project seeks to ease the effects of poverty and increase mutual understanding by establishing meaningful relationships, promoting education, and offering material aid. With the help of referring agencies located in the areas served, The Box Project offers programs that simply alleviate the suffering of some, while also providing opportunities to support the growth and success of others seeking to learn how to better themselves, and willing to work toward the goal of achieving increased self-sufficiency. For more information, visit www.boxproject.org or call 386-677-8094.

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