



## News Release

### For Immediate Release:

#### Local Families Send Boxes Of Hope

### **Generous Lake Forest residents change lives by sponsoring and helping American families in rural poverty.**

Plainville, CT—April 22, 2004— With the help of The Box Project, a national, non-profit organization, people in our community are making a difference in the lives of families living in rural poverty in America.

The Chaifetz family from Lake Forest, Illinois is just one of your neighbors helping those in need. Jill and her daughter Jessica, a junior at Lake Forest High School, have been working together sponsoring a family in Virginia for over twelve years. Jill initially got involved with The Box Project program because it was an easy way to make a big difference in a family's life at a grass roots level. She felt it was a good opportunity to instill in her children a sense of giving to others while learning about other cultures. "Part of the genius of The Box Project is that the idea is so simple—a one-to-one relationship with a family in rural poverty, without bureaucracy or paperwork. You get to see the direct results of your efforts," says Jill. "Staying involved becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. The monthly letters of appreciation are so contagious that we can't wait to help again and again."

The Chaifetz family has experienced the joy and satisfaction of contributing to their sponsored family in special ways, such as providing shoes that allowed the little girl to go to school, a dress for a 6<sup>th</sup> grade graduation ceremony, and a winter coat to keep her warm while walking to school. But they also enjoy working together to buy and pack their typical monthly boxes, which include every day items that fill the gaps for their match family—such as food, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, and cleaning supplies.

Jill says "I highly recommend The Box Project to my friends. It is very rewarding to see how we can make a real difference in people's lives through this program."

The Box Project acts as a matchmaker, pairing sponsors with carefully screened individuals or families that need help. The goal of the program is to help them become self-sufficient and overcome the cycle of poverty. The sponsors offer long-term friendships, including encouragement, advice, and boxes of needed supplies about once a month. Sponsors and recipients communicate directly with each other through letters, or phone calls. They send boxes of food, clothing, or supplies directly to the families. As they come to know each other more, trust and friendships grow—providing a positive and valuable experience for both the recipient and the sponsor.

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**Our Mission:** Encouraging families and individuals living in rural poverty in America to become self-sufficient and overcome the cycle of poverty by offering them friendship, education, and material aid.



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This Family Match program is unique in offering direct communication between the matched families and eliminating the middleman. Sponsors control how much time they spend and what finances or resources they want to contribute to their matched family. Often they will get their own families, friends and social groups to assist them with their sponsorship, all the while offering the opportunity to teach their children the value of helping and learning about other people and cultures

“You are not just being asked to give to a cause”, said Cindy Shearer, President of The Box Project. “You are helping John, Kathy and Camille—a family you’ve come to actually know and who communicate with you too.”

The Box Project sponsors are matched with families in rural areas of Maine, West Virginia, Virginia, Mississippi, and Kentucky, as well as Native Americans on reservations of South Dakota. Currently over 450 families have been screened and are on a waiting list for a sponsor. The Box Project also offers limited time sponsorship matches during the holidays, and welcomes donations to support and expand our education programs and other services. For more information about how to get involved, go to [www.boxproject.org](http://www.boxproject.org) or call 800-268-9928.

#### **About The Box Project**

The Box Project, Inc. is a national, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Founded in 1962, The Box Project has been working to help people living in areas of the United States with the highest rates of rural poverty. We seek to ease the effects of poverty and increase mutual understanding through friendship, education, and material aid. With the help of our referring agencies, we seek out families who want to better themselves, work, and learn, then provide programs to support their growth and success.

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