

MEDIA ALERT

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE – WEDNESDAY, May 28, 2008, AFTER 4 P.M.

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**Blind and Visually Impaired Children Joining in a SURPRISE
PRESENTATION at Build-A-Bear Workshop®
ROCCO FIORENTINO,
11-Year-Old Ambassador for the Little Rock Foundation, Named
One of 12 Young Leaders Worldwide**

When/Where: Today, Wednesday, May 28, 3:30 p.m.,
Build-A-Bear Workshop Cherry Hill Mall
2000 Route 38
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002
(856) 665-1612

- Members of the media should please arrive no later than 3:15 p.m., with the surprise to take place at 3:30 p.m.

WHAT: As the ambassador for The Little Rock Foundation, Rocco Fiorentino, 11, will help younger blind and visually impaired children make furry friends at Build-A-Bear Workshop®, without knowing the store has actually arranged to surprise him with a \$10,000 Award and honor! **Rocco is being named a 2008 Huggable Hero, one of 12 young people in the world, for his humanitarian efforts on behalf of other blind and visually impaired children.**

PHOTO/INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES:

- The moment of surprise when Build-A-Bear Workshop representatives and Bearemy®, the Mascot, surprise Rocco with the good news.
- Interviews with 2008 Huggable Hero Rocco Fiorentino, his parents, his nominator, Sharla Feldscher, and Build-A-Bear Workshop Representatives

HUGGABLE HERO PRIZES:

As a Huggable Hero, Rocco is part of a select group that will meet in July in Washington, D.C., to participate in a leadership symposium and be honored at special ceremonies. In addition, each of the 12 Huggable Heroes will receive \$10,000 USD (\$7,500 USD in the form of an educational scholarship and \$2,500 USD from the Build-A-Bear Workshop Foundation to be donated to the charity of the hero's choice). They also will be featured in the 2009 Build-A-Bear Workshop Huggable Heroes calendar.

WHY:

Rocco is being recognized for his efforts to raise funds and awareness for blindness. He has spoken to New Jersey State legislators persuading them to allocate \$1.2 million to Braille education and services for blind children. In addition, Rocco serves as Ambassador for the Little Rock Foundation that provides resources to visually-impaired children and their parents, educators and therapists. There are two Little Rock Resource Centers in Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and at Wills Eye Hospital, a free day camp in Medford, NJ, scholarships and community outreach programs. Rocco is also a celebrated jazz musician.

BACKGROUND

In 2004, Build-A-Bear Workshop® launched the Huggable Heroes® program, each year searching for and recognizing young people making a difference in their communities. Former Huggable Heroes have been honored for their work with such causes as: raising funds for children's cancer and juvenile diabetes research, helping children in underdeveloped countries and helping animals. Huggable Heroes are young leaders who demonstrate strong levels of kindness, compassion and leadership to help make the world a better place.

From December 7, 2007, through February 8, 2008, Build-A-Bear Workshop accepted nominations for 2008 Huggable Heroes. Young people were nominated for their volunteer and community service efforts. Nominations were narrowed down to a field of 120 semi-finalists, 31 finalists and now 12 Huggable Heroes. In addition, two Build-A-Bear Workshop associates will also be selected as Huggable Heroes.

***** YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND THE SURPRISE *****