

## For Immediate Release

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# TOYS FOR TOTS LITERACY PROGRAM SEEKS NOMINATIONS FOR CHILDHOOD LITERACY AWARD

## *The UPS Store Celebrates Literacy Program's 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary, Raises More than \$1 Million*

QUANTICO, Va., March 31, 2010 – Today, the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation and [The UPS Store](#)® announced they are seeking nominations for the Alferd Williams Literacy Award to commemorate the second anniversary of the [Toys for Tots Literacy Program](#). The award honors an individual who has raised awareness of the issue of childhood illiteracy and taken action to address it. Nominations are open April 1 through May 31.

The inaugural Alferd Williams Literacy Award was presented to its namesake in 2009. Williams rose to national attention when he enrolled in first grade at the age of 70 in order to pursue his dream of learning to read.

“Alferd’s compelling and inspirational story dramatically illustrates the importance of developing good reading skills,” said LtGen. Pete Osman, USMC (Ret), president and CEO of the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation. “This award is a great way to celebrate Alferd’s determination and to honor an individual who is helping to alleviate childhood illiteracy in our nation.”

In addition to receiving a set of crystal bookends, the winner will be able to designate \$500 in books from Scholastic to a school or organization that serves less-fortunate children. Additional prizes include a trip to Washington, D.C., for two persons to attend the U.S. Marine Corps Summer Parade in June 2011 and \$500 in printing, mailbox or shipping services from *The UPS Store*. Additional information, including a nomination form and the official rules, is available at [www.ToysforTotsLiteracy.org](http://www.ToysforTotsLiteracy.org) or at participating [The UPS Store](#) locations.

The Toys for Tots Literacy Program seeks to place new books directly into the hands of less-fortunate children. Since its launch two years ago, the program has raised more than \$1 million.

As exclusive sponsors of the Toys for Tots Literacy Program, participating *The UPS Store* locations will sell \$1 donation cards throughout April. All donations will be used to place books into the hands of local children in need. Centers will continue additional fundraising activities throughout the year, including a coin box program for customers to donate their spare change.

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To help raise awareness of the need for initiatives like the Toys for Tots Literacy Program, *The UPS Store* network is once again working with the [National Center for Family Literacy](#) (NCFL) and its president and founder, Sharon Darling.

“The cycle of poverty that grips a growing number of children in our country cannot be broken unless we address the underlying issue of illiteracy,” said Darling. “Fortunately, efforts like the Toys for Tots Literacy Program make it easy for all of us to help make a difference.”

To give the 2010 campaign a healthy launch, Mail Boxes Etc., Inc. (MBE), franchisor of *The UPS Store*, is donating \$50,000 and The UPS Foundation is again making a \$100,000 grant to the program.

“Our franchisees have shown enthusiastic support for the Toys for Tots Literacy Program since its inception,” said MBE President Stuart Mathis. “We are looking forward to another successful campaign this year and are pleased to have the ongoing support of The UPS Foundation. Of course, the best part is having an opportunity to help less-fortunate children in the communities we serve.”

“Even in the current economy, we have been able to extend our reach and impact in a very meaningful way by giving the gift of reading to those who need it most,” said Osman. “Now, with the Alferd Williams Literacy Award, the program will be able to recognize those individuals who truly make a difference in their communities.”

For more information on the Toys for Tots Literacy Program and the Alferd Williams Literacy Award, please visit [www.ToysforTotsLiteracy.org](http://www.ToysforTotsLiteracy.org) or [www.theupsstore.com](http://www.theupsstore.com).

### **About The U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys For Tots Program**

The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation is a not for profit organization authorized by the U.S. Marine Corps and the Department of Defense to provide fundraising and other necessary support for the annual Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program. Now in its 63<sup>rd</sup> year, Toys for Tots provides joy and a message of hope to less fortunate children through the gift of a new toy or book during the Christmas holiday season. Our gifts offer these children hope, recognition and a positive memory they will cherish for a lifetime. Many of the gifts we provide, such as books, games and sports equipment, make a significant contribution to the educational, social and recreational development of these children. In 2009, Marines distributed gifts to 7.4 million children in 691 communities nationwide. The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation relies on individual donations from the American public as well as support from corporate sponsors. For more information, visit [www.toysfortots.org](http://www.toysfortots.org).

### **About The UPS Store**

With approximately 4,800 locations, *The UPS Store*® and *Mail Boxes Etc.*® network comprises the world’s largest franchise system of retail shipping, postal, document and business service centers throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and Canada. In the United States, *The UPS Store* and *Mail Boxes Etc.* locations are independently owned and operated by licensed franchisees of Mail Boxes Etc., Inc., a UPS subsidiary. In Canada, locations are independently owned and operated by licensed franchisees of master licensee MBEC Communications, L.P. For additional information, please visit [www.theupsstore.com](http://www.theupsstore.com) or [www.mbe.com](http://www.mbe.com).

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**Editor’s Note:** To view footage of the inaugural Alferd Williams Literacy Award presentation and to learn more about the award’s namesake, Alferd Williams, please visit the [Toys for Tots YouTube channel](#).