

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sleep Country Canada embraces SchoolBOX expansion to Toronto to help Central American children access an education

Toronto ON – 4 February 2010 – It took Sleep Country Canada less than 24 hours to extend their offer to help SchoolBOX expand to Toronto from its Ottawa Valley roots in the small town of Almonte, Ontario. SchoolBOX is a grassroots, entrepreneurially driven Ontario charity that supports the right of every child in Central America to a basic education. The expansion affords SchoolBOX access to the talent and generosity of Canada's largest city as it caps another year of 90 per cent-plus growth.

Sleep Country's offer, which included office space, furniture, a dedicated phone line and a free Wi-Fi Internet connection for SchoolBOX President Tom Affleck and an assistant at Sleep Country Canada's Toronto headquarters, is consistent with Sleep Country Canada's support of child-focused charities. It's also consistent with Affleck's trajectory as a start-up not-for-profit executive who began SchoolBOX with the simple gift of a notebook and a pencil to a young girl in Northern Nicaragua in 2006.

"As a consumer-focused company with retail outlets across the nation, Sleep Country Canada is asked to support innumerable causes," says Sleep Country President Christine Magee. "What made this one so compelling is SchoolBOX's remarkable effectiveness. Five dollars provides an educational package including five notebooks, two pencils, a pencil sharpener, ruler and eraser, and \$8,000 to \$10,000 builds a classroom for children who have been doing their lessons under trees or in steel shipping containers without basic learning materials."

When Affleck, then 28, gave the Nicaraguan girl his notebook and a pencil in 2006, her father was thrilled. "Now you can go to school," he said to her. Faced with the reality that the most basic school supplies separate Central American children from receiving an education, Affleck wanted to do more. After leaving his full-time job working on a large project funded by The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), he began devoting his own time and financial resources to making a difference on the ground versus behind a desk.

"What started as a gesture of goodwill has changed the lives of nearly 6,000 children in 33 Nicaraguan communities," says Affleck. "We just completed the construction of our fifteenth new classroom and have begun working on two more with the help of 26 Canadian SchoolBOX supporters who are coming to Nicaragua to help us build as part of our voluntour program." In 2009, SchoolBOX's voluntour program included a component called Aboriginal Youth Empowering Students that brought aboriginal students from across Canada to work in impoverished communities in Nicaragua as part of a personal healing experience.

In 2009 SchoolBOX revenue was \$240,000, up 90 per cent from 2008. Affleck hopes the expansion to Toronto in 2010 through the generosity of Sleep Country Canada will see another year of impressive growth and profound impact on the lives of children in Central America.

For more information please visit www.SchoolBOX.ca or join the [SchoolBOX Facebook](#)

[group.](#)

Media Contact Information

Jill McCubbin, Conversation Architect
market2world communications inc.
(613) 256-3939
jill@market2world.com

Tom Affleck, Founder and President
SchoolBOX
647-882-2578
tom@SchoolBOX.ca

Christine Magee
President
Sleep Country Canada
416-242-4774