



## 2011 TARRANT COUNTY BACK TO SCHOOL ROUNDUP

### *Recap*

Thousands showed up at the Will Rogers Memorial Center for the **seventh-annual Tarrant County Back To School Roundup** on August 10. A one-stop shop to prepare the whole family for the start of school, Roundup provided pre-registered families with all the back-to-school essentials including free school supplies; free health, dental and vision screenings; immunizations; haircuts; information on education, health and social services; and much more.

After last year's unprecedented turnout, qualifying families were required to pre-register in order to attend Roundup. Sponsors and community partners pitched in to help get the word out, organize and volunteer at pre-registration events, provide monetary support and more. Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley, Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price, Father Esteban Jasso of All Saints Catholic Church, sponsors and partners gathered for a news conference in June to inform media and officially kick off the pre-registration run. About 20 pre-registration events were scheduled in Arlington, Everman, Fort Worth, Kennedale and White Settlement, including two last-minute events held the weekend before Roundup to ensure as many families as possible had the opportunity to participate. As a result, more than 10,000 students pre-registered guaranteeing admission, free school supplies, free backpacks for elementary schoolchildren, and full access to information and services at Roundup.

Still, some families chose to camp out the night before Roundup to secure a front-line spot. As the sun came up, the gates opened and lines moved toward the Amon Carter Exhibit Hall. Paschal High School's 24-member varsity cheer squad, mascot and 20-member drum line rallied around the outdoor stage entertaining and energizing crowds before the doors opened. Fox 4's very spirited Fiona Gorostiza had people laughing and cheering as emcee of the opening ceremonies. Fiona was joined by Texas State Senator Wendy Davis; Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley; Commissioners Roy Brooks and Andy Nguyen; Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price; Fort Worth ISD Interim Superintendent Walter Dansby; Walmart spokesperson Daniel Morales; and other sponsors and partners who welcomed and thanked families for attending and showing their dedication to education.

As hoped, lines quickly evaporated once the doors opened at 8 a.m. as families were moved inside to find friendly greeters and volunteers, dozens of booths, entertainment and refreshingly chilly temps. Hundreds of volunteers were stationed to answer questions, pass out free water and direct people throughout the day.

Hot temps didn't deter Tarrant County families from taking advantage of all the many services at Roundup, as Fort Worth Fire & Rescue estimated 20,000 in attendance. The Fort Worth Police Department and Fort Worth Fire & Rescue implemented additional safety measures. Thankfully, there were no heat-related incidents – and only a few medical situations that resulted from individuals' existing medical conditions. Coca-Cola donated an abundance of free bottled water and coolers and provided volunteers to help keep families hydrated.

At the end of the day, Roundup volunteers distributed more than 10,000 sets of school supplies and 7,000 colorful backpacks to elementary-age students. Walmart conducted 1,500 health screenings and 1,600 vision screenings; the Immunization Coalition of Tarrant County immunized 190 children and administered more than 560 vaccinations; Ogle Hair Skin & Nails – Arlington and Ogle Hair, Skin & Nails – Hurst donated over 900 haircuts; and Baylor College of Dentistry conducted 876 dental screenings and varnishings.

Without all the tremendous support of sponsors, partners and the 350 volunteers, the Tarrant County Back To School Roundup would not have been possible. A big thanks goes to presenting sponsor **Walmart**. Other sponsors included **Aetna Foundation, All Smiles Dental, Altrusa Foundation, Amerigroup, Chase, Chesapeake Energy, Cooks Children's Health Plan, Coca-Cola Enterprises, EFH Corporation/TXU Energy, Fidelity Investments, First United Methodist Church, Fort Worth Rotary Club, JPS/Partners Together for Health, Katrine Menzing Deakins Trust, Loyalty Class of First United Methodist Church, Grandmother's Club, MetroPCS, OmniAmerican Bank, Reddi Ice,**

**Sid Richardson Foundation, Signs by Tomorrow, Tarrant County Credit Union, Tarrant County Young Lawyers Association, The Ryan Foundation, and XTO Energy, Inc.**

Community partners were **2-1-1, Arlington ISD, Baylor College of Dentistry, Boys and Girls Clubs of Arlington, Boys and Girls Clubs of Fort Worth, Crowley ISD, Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD, Fort Worth ISD, Greater Fort Worth Dental Hygienist Society, Immunization Coalition of Tarrant County, Kennedale ISD, Ogle School of Hair and Nails – Arlington, Ogle School of Hair and Nails – Hurst, Tarrant County College, Tarrant County Medical Society Alliance Foundation, Tarrant County Public Health, The T, United Way of Tarrant County, and White Settlement ISD.** Media partners were **Fox 4 and My 27, Univision 23, Time Warner Cable, *The Greensheet*, K104 KKDA, Smooth R&B 105.7 KRNB, La Voz del Pueblo 1270 AM and La Kalle 107.9.**

Roundup was entirely funded by private donations and in-kind contributions. It is a collaborative effort between Tarrant County and its 20 school districts, its municipalities, public health department, state agencies, nonprofits, corporate sponsors and volunteers.

“Because one in five Tarrant County children live in poverty, many students begin school unprepared and therefore a step behind,” said Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley. “That is why Roundup is so important for families, and we are so grateful to our donors, nonprofit partners, media sponsors, schools and volunteers for all their support to gear and groom our kids for a successful start to school.”

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