

Disney to Award Record \$1.5 Million to Benefit Central Florida Kids

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., May 16, 2012 – With help from Mickey Mouse and dozens of VoluntEARS, Walt Disney World Resort today kicked off efforts to award a record \$1.5 million in Disney *Helping Kids Shine* grants to 59 organizations that help enrich the lives of Central Florida kids.

Organizations and school districts with programs that use art, music and theater to stimulate creativity and critical thinking among children were the first to receive grants during a visit to the Orlando Repertory Theatre.

“At Walt Disney World Resort, our vision is to build on our philanthropic legacy by investing in programs that make a lasting change in our community and promote the happiness and well being of children and families”, said Nancy Gidusko, director of community relations for Walt Disney World Resort. “These organizations represent the best of the best.”

Throughout the week, Walt Disney World Resort will make surprise visits to other organizations in the five counties that encourage creativity, innovation and compassion in children. Combined, the grants are expected to benefit an estimated 70,000 children in Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Lake and Polk counties.

A 15-member committee that included community leaders, government officials, educators, entrepreneurs and Cast Members selected this year’s grant recipients.