

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### NEW CHARITY ENGAGES STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL CHILD WELFARE CAUSES

*Milwaukee Jewish Day School empowers students to look beyond their community*

Milwaukee, Wisc. (February 16, 2009) – What is the connection between iPods and Africa? DVDs and Asia? Cell phones and the Jews of Uganda? It's not only that many of the metals necessary to produce these modern conveniences come from Africa or that they are manufactured in Asia. For the 7<sup>th</sup> grade students at Milwaukee Jewish Day School (MJDS), these items also represent their best chance to make a difference in the world.

Voice of the Children (*Kol HaYeladim* in Hebrew), a new component of MJDS' 7<sup>th</sup> grade world studies curriculum, engages students in the process of raising money and awareness for two issues: child welfare in Africa and Asia, and underprivileged Jewish communities outside the United States.

Students serve the charity in three important ways:

1. by raising awareness of child welfare issues through Voice of the Children's website and school activities;
2. by acting as the charity's chief fundraisers and marketers; and
3. by researching and voting on organizations to receive charitable distributions.

"What better way to teach world studies and Jewish values than to engage the children in helping other children around the world," said Brian King, MJDS world studies teacher. "Worldwide, childhood poverty is at epidemic levels; our students have a chance to make a real difference in children's lives."

Voice of the Children integrates a variety of academic disciplines and curricula with MJDS' core values of healing the world [*tikkun olam*], justice [*tzedakah*], and good deeds [*mitzvot*].

- ◆ The 7<sup>th</sup> grade world studies curriculum focuses on child welfare issues in Africa and Asia, and students are challenged to research and develop problem-solving skills to address these issues.
- ◆ Students build important technology skills such as website development and online collaboration.
- ◆ Students develop public speaking and letter writing skills as part of their fundraising efforts.
- ◆ Operating a business organization offers hands-on lessons about economics and the business world.

To raise money, Voice of the Children has implemented an innovative fundraising process called the "iRaising Initiative." The concept is simple: the charity collects items that no longer are in use yet have a market value such as DVDs, video games, hardcover books or consumer electronics, and then sells them online through the Amazon Marketplace, eBay, or other

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appropriate sites. The charity also will raise money through more conventional methods such as direct solicitations of individuals and corporations, bake sales and car washes. In just six weeks of operation, Voice of the Children has raised over \$1900.

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### **About Voice of the Children**

Voice of the Children, a Wisconsin nonprofit corporation, is a wholly controlled subsidiary of Milwaukee Jewish Day School. The organization will be applying for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status during tax year 2009.

Voice of the Children is an educational and charitable organization that relies entirely on volunteers for its administration and fundraising efforts.

Guided by the Jewish values of *tzedakah* and *tikkun olam*, Voice of the Children encourages Milwaukee Jewish Day School middle school students to develop their own sense of social justice and philanthropy; promotes awareness of child welfare issues in Africa and Asia and underprivileged Jewish communities abroad; and raises money to support charities that protect children in Africa and Asia, and develop underprivileged Jewish communities abroad.

### **About Milwaukee Jewish Day School**

Milwaukee Jewish Day School is an independent, co-educational school for Jewish children from kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. It is a pluralistic, egalitarian, community school and accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS). MJDS offers Jewish children an exceptional high school preparatory, Hebrew and Jewish education. Its mission is to provide students with an outstanding education that builds in them the knowledge and feelings to live a Jewish life, reach their personal and academic potential, and contribute positively to the Jewish community, American society and to the people of Israel.

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