

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Dara Klatt, Discovery Education
240-662-3043, Dara_Klatt@discovery.comSean McBride, Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation
202-309-3050, smcbride@dsmstrategic.com**HEALTHY WEIGHT COMMITMENT FOUNDATION AND DISCOVERY EDUCATION AWARD
MORE THAN \$240,000 IN PRIZES TO DESERVING SCHOOLS NATIONWIDE AS PART OF
HEALTHY LIVING INITIATIVE**

*-- For the first time, Elementary School in Texas Awarded Grand Prize Giveaway for a
School Serving the Military Community --*

Silver Spring, Md. (May 10, 2017) – The [Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation](#) (HWCF), a broad-based not-for-profit organization whose focus is the reduction of childhood obesity, and [Discovery Education](#), the leading provider of digital content and professional development for K-12 classrooms, today announced the winners of the 2017 [Healthy Playground Makeover Sweepstakes](#) and [Smart from the Start Awards](#), annually offered incentive programs from the Together Counts™ program. Designed to encourage students to lead healthy, active lifestyles, these programs strive to increase the impact of health and wellness programs both in and out of the classroom, and will award more than \$240,000 in prizes to deserving schools nationwide.

The following schools have been chosen as this year's grand prize winners:

[Healthy Playground Makeover Sweepstakes:](#)**Grand prize winners:**

- **Welch Elementary School in Newnan, GA**
- **Sunset Park Elementary School in Wilmington, NC (*Title I)**
- **Randolph Elementary School in Universal City, TX (*Military)**

Selected from nearly 620,000 entries nationwide, these three schools are the 2017 grand prize winners and will be awarded \$30,000 in cash and sporting goods and a new PlayCubes™ Playground from Playworld, a leading manufacturer of imaginative playground and fitness equipment (entire prize package valued at \$60,405 each). Randolph Elementary School was the first winner ever of the grand prize to a U.S. military base or installation for a school or community organization serving the children of active duty military. Sunset Park Elementary was awarded the grand prize for a school that qualifies for Title I funding due to the number of students receiving free or reduced price lunch.

“Welch Elementary is so excited about our Healthy Playground grant. Our mission is, ‘We Ensure the Success of Each Student’. In order for students to be successful, they must be well rounded and feel good about themselves. This will give our students the opportunity to get fit and show their success.” – Janice Smith, Principal, Welch Elementary School

“As an urban school located near downtown Wilmington, qualifying for a 100% free breakfast and lunch program, many of our families struggle to initiate and/or maintain a healthy lifestyle. This prize will allow us to focus some of our energy and resources into assisting our students and families to learn how a healthy lifestyle will help them achieve their goals. As you know, a healthy body and mind are keys to success.” – Diego Lehocky, Principal, Sunset Park Elementary School

“Wow! A new playground for our kids! A playground is the place for children to develop not only physically but emotionally. It’s every child’s dream and for the military child, it’s the best place to be to meet a new friend.” – Allana Hemenway, Principal, Randolph Elementary School

Smart from the Start Awards:

Grand prize winner:

- **Sacred Heart School in Camden, NJ**

The Smart from the Start Awards empower preschool teachers to strategize wellness initiatives using the free Smart from the Start Pre-K curriculum in their classrooms. Sacred Heart School in Camden, NJ will receive a \$20,000 grant for their action plan to focus on eating a variety of fruits and vegetables and incorporating more physical activity in and out of the classroom. Sacred Heart students lack access to green space for physical activity and high rates of violence and crime make many parents hesitant about letting their children play outdoors.

To improve health and wellness habits for their students, Sacred Heart School used the Smart from the Start lessons to get their preschoolers moving more while also making efforts to include fresh produce in meals and snacks. In addition, parents received a newsletter on nutrition. Sacred Heart School will use the award grant to create an outdoor classroom, develop a Health and Wellness Library with resources for students to bring home, and purchase cooking equipment to enable the school to have family cooking nights.

“We are so grateful for this award and the long-term impact it will have! We are eager and excited to make investments in equipment and materials that will enhance nutrition and physical activity for our children for years to come, both at school and in partnership with their families.” – Cheryl Heatwole, Preschool Educator, Sacred Heart School

To see a comprehensive list of all winners and prizes please visit, <http://www.togethercounts.com/at-school/win-for-your-school>.

Together Counts

Established in 2010, the Together Counts program is a comprehensive health and wellness initiative designed to encourage students, educators and families to live healthy lifestyles. Since the program’s launch, a total of more than \$1.6M has been awarded to deserving schools across the country. Available at no cost, the program offers educators and students nationwide standards-based curriculum, as well as the chance to win cash grants and equipment for their schools. Updated in 2016 to address overall wellness, lesson plans tailored to Pre-K, K-2 and 3-5 teach goal-planning skills and strategies for developing lifelong resilience. All lesson plans, family resources and incentive programs can be found at <http://www.togethercounts.com/>; follow @TogetherCounts on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

“Empowering children to make healthy decisions that become healthy habits for life is a top priority in the battle to reverse obesity rates,” said Becky Johnson, Executive Director of the Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation. “Rewarding schools that develop and implement innovative healthy lifestyle programs is the perfect way to honor their leadership and develop a compendium of best practices that can be adopted in other communities at the same time. We are proud to support these programs and congratulate all of the winners.”

“Discovery Education is proud of our continued partnership with the Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation to reward schools across America through the Healthy Playground Makeover Sweepstakes and Smart from the Start Awards for their impactful efforts on improving students’ health and wellness,” said Lori McFarling, Senior Vice President, Discovery Education. “These programs offer the opportunity to teach the importance of health and wellness, and help establish healthy habits for students early on.”

About Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation

Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation (HWCF) is a broad-based not-for-profit organization whose mission is to help reduce obesity, especially childhood obesity, by encouraging positive and permanent lifestyle changes among school-

aged children and their families. The Foundation develops and implements innovative and collaborative educational, marketplace and community solutions with its coalition of 300 corporate and not-for-profit partners. Through its free, award-winning Together Counts™ wellness curriculum, the Foundation has reached more than 44 million students in the U.S. As the first commitment to former First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move initiative and verified by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, HWCF's food and beverage company members gave consumers more lower calorie options by removing 6.4 trillion calories from their products—surpassing their pledge by more than 400 percent three years ahead of schedule. In June 2016 the program expanded internationally with the launch of the Latin American Commitment to a Healthy Future at the World Economic Forum in Medellín, Colombia. www.healthyweightcommit.org

About Discovery Education

Discovery Education is the global leader in standards-based digital content for K-12, transforming teaching and learning with award-winning digital textbooks, multimedia content, professional development, and the largest professional learning community of its kind. Serving 4.5 million educators and over 50 million students, Discovery Education's services are in half of U.S. classrooms, 50 percent of all primary schools in the UK, and more than 50 countries. Discovery Education partners with districts, states and like-minded organizations to captivate students, empower teachers, and transform classrooms with customized solutions that increase academic achievement. Discovery Education is powered by Discovery Communications (NASDAQ: DISCA, DISCB, DISCK), the number one nonfiction media company in the world. Explore the future of education at www.discoveryeducation.com.

About Playworld

Playworld is a division of PlayPower® Inc. and believes The World Needs Play®. Play is vital to everyone's health and well-being. It's something you are never too young or too old to enjoy. We develop playground environments where creativity is king, belly laughs are welcome and children make the rules. Playworld equipment is designed to unleash the transformational power of play so bodies grow stronger, children play safely and imagination can take flight. For over 45 years, Playworld has created innovative, inclusive and meaningful outdoor play experiences for all ages and abilities. Visit Playworld.com.

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