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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **LIGHTHOUSE CENTRAL FLORIDA RECEIVES \$3,990 GRANT FROM THE DOLLAR GENERAL LITERACY FOUNDATION TO SUPPORT YOUTH LITERACY**

ORLANDO, September 9, 2016 - The Dollar General Literacy Foundation recently awarded Lighthouse Central Florida a \$3,990.00 grant to support youth literacy and braille instruction for children aged 6-13 who live with vision loss. This local grant is part of \$4.5 million in youth literacy grants awarded to approximately 1,000 organizations across the 43 states that Dollar General serves. Given at the beginning of the academic school year, these grants are aimed at supporting teachers, schools and organizations with resources to strengthen and enhance literacy instruction.

"Nearly 90 percent of American children who are blind are unable to read or write because they are not taught Braille or given access to it. As many as 50 percent of high school students who are blind drop out of high school," said Lee Nasehi, president & CEO of Lighthouse Central Florida/Lighthouse Works. "The generous donation from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation will go toward the purchase of audible brailers to help young people become literate and fluent in Braille. This kind of technology provides a more intuitive way to communicate, teach and learn braille together. It includes a video screen with large print display, combined with audio feedback, for an instantaneous, multisensory learning experience."

The school age years—ages 6-13, is a time experts consider especially crucial in an adolescent's development. The School-Age program, here at Lighthouse, provides direct support services to children (ages 6-13) living with blindness and vision loss and are meant to supplement the assistance they receive in the school system. These skills allow the children to successfully use educational techniques learned at school in their home, and will enhance functionality in social and public settings. These crucial programs help kids better access their community, learn daily living skills and build relationships with one another that create a sense of belonging.

"By awarding these grants, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation is committed to making a meaningful impact in our local communities," said Todd Vasos, Dollar General's chief executive officer. "These grants provide funds to support youth literacy initiatives and educational programs throughout the communities we serve to ensure a successful academic year for students."

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Committed to helping increase the literacy skills of individuals of all ages, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation has awarded more than \$127 million in grants to nonprofit organizations, helping nearly 7.9 million individuals take their first steps toward literacy or continued education since its inception in 1993. The Dollar General Literacy Foundation awards grants each year to nonprofit organizations, schools and libraries within a 20-mile radius of a Dollar General store or distribution center to support adult, family, summer and youth literacy programs.

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation also supports customers interested in learning how to read, speak English or prepare for the high school equivalency test. At the cash register of every Dollar General store, customers may pick up a brochure with a postage-paid reply card that can be mailed in for a referral to a local organization that offers free literacy services.

### **About Lighthouse Central Florida**

Since 1976, Lighthouse Central Florida has provided education, independent life skills and job training and placement to more than 100,000 people with sight impairment and their families. They are the only private, non-profit agency offering a comprehensive range of services to people living with sight impairment in the tri-county area. Through effective programs, proven curricula, certified instructors and years of personal and professional experience, Lighthouse ensures that individuals of all backgrounds have the tools they need to lead productive, independent lives while pursuing their dreams and goals without limitations.

### **About the Dollar General Literacy Foundation**

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation is proud to support initiatives that help others improve their lives through literacy and education as part of the company's mission of Serving Others for over 20 years. Since its inception in 1993, the Dollar General Literacy Foundation has awarded more than \$127 million in grants to nonprofit organizations, helping more than 7.9 million individuals take their first steps toward literacy or continued education. For more information about the Dollar General Literacy Foundation and its grant programs, visit [www.dgliteracy.org](http://www.dgliteracy.org).

### **About Dollar General Corporation**

Dollar General Corporation has been delivering value to shoppers for over 75 years through its mission of Serving Others. Dollar General helps shoppers Save time. Save money. Every day!® by offering products that are frequently used and replenished, such as food, snacks, health and beauty aids, cleaning supplies, basic apparel, housewares and seasonal items at low everyday prices in convenient neighborhood locations. Dollar General operated 13,000 stores in 43 states as of August 13, 2016. In addition to high quality private brands, Dollar General sells products from America's most-trusted manufacturers such as Clorox, Energizer, Procter & Gamble, Hanes, Coca-Cola, Mars, Unilever, Nestle, Kimberly-Clark, Kellogg's, General Mills, and PepsiCo. For more information on Dollar General, please visit [www.dollargeneral.com](http://www.dollargeneral.com).

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