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Food Bank of Delaware Marks Grand Opening of School Pantry at Lake Forest High School

Felton, Del. (January 19, 2012) – Anti-hunger advocates, community leaders, students and officials from the Lake Forest School District and First Lady Carla Markell marked the grand opening of the Food Bank of Delaware’s school pantry located within Lake Forest High School.

Through the new program, at-risk families with students enrolled at Lake Forest High School will be able to access emergency food and hygiene products by visiting a food pantry within the school. Twenty-five to 30 families will be discretely identified by school officials, and the new pantry will offer a variety of nutritious food products and hygiene items. Families will select food based on their household’s needs each week. Food for the pantry will be provided by the Food Bank of Delaware and school-wide food drives or community donations.

“I shudder to think what the state would be like without the services of the Food Bank of Delaware,” said First Lady Carla Markell. “It’s okay to ask for help, and most of all, it’s important to give help.”

“With 14.8 percent of Delaware’s children living in food insecure households it makes sense to begin partnering with schools to ensure that Delaware families, especially children, have the necessary nutrition in order to learn and grow,” said Food Bank of Delaware President and CEO Patricia Beebe. “Lake Forest School District does an excellent job collaborating with other agencies to provide much-needed resources to students and their families. With more than one in four Delawareans depending on emergency food assistance, community collaborations are critical to ensure that Delawareans receive the assistance they need.”

Twenty-plus kindergarten students from the district also attended this morning’s grand opening in celebration of their class collecting the most canned goods through the district’s Battle of the Belly food drive, “I’m really excited to have the class of 2024 with us,” said Lake Forest Principal John Filicicchia. “This classroom contributed the most cans during our Battle of the Bellies and they just brought an additional 60 pounds today.”

“This community has developed its own personality,” said Lake Forest School District Superintendent Dan Curry. “You’ll find no warmer community or a student government geared at helping others than here in Lake Forest.”

The Food Bank of Delaware hopes to open additional school pantries during the 2011-2012 school year. The cost to sponsor one school pantry for an entire year is \$10,000. It costs \$15,000 to sponsor a pantry for an entire year. The food bank is currently in need of community supporters to help fund the new initiative. For more information about sponsoring a school food pantry, please contact Larry Haas, Food Bank of Delaware Development Director, at (302) 294-0185 or lhaas@fbd.org.

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The Food Bank of Delaware distributes between seven and 10 million pounds of food and grocery products each year its network of 475 hunger-relief program partners throughout the state and also provides thousands of meals a month for children through the After-School Feeding Program, the Summer Food Service Program and the Backpack Program. The Food Bank's hunger-relief programs directly provide for 241,600 Delawareans at risk of going without meals each year. For more information about the Food Bank of Delaware, visit www.fbd.org or call (302) 292-1305.