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Food Brings Hope Adult Literacy Program Recognized by Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy ~ During 17th Annual Celebration of Reading Event ~

Bonita Springs, February 17, 2017 - The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy highlighted Food Brings Hope (FBH) during the **17th Celebration of Reading** event showcasing the program's success in establishing family literacy for parents and children at Pierson Elementary in Volusia County. Established in 2016 in Pierson, FBH's literacy program has experienced enormous growth and success.

The Celebration of Reading Event took place in Bonita Springs. The event was chaired by Jeb Bush Jr. and featured three New York Times best-selling authors, Chris Gardner, Candice Millard and Laura Numeroff. This event helps raise awareness and funds to support the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, which is dedicated to establishing literacy across America.

The foundation also funds the development of innovative family literacy projects in which parents and children learn and read together. Food Brings Hope was honored to be selected as the only program highlighted at the annual event. Mrs. Forough Hosseini, the founder and chair of Food Brings Hope, has integrated the small Pierson community by establishing the literacy program as a key vehicle for educating both parents and children at Pierson Elementary.

Program coordinators, instructors, volunteers, parents and children meet three nights each week to allow tutoring for children and literacy training for parents. Certified teachers and DSC Quanta Honors students volunteer their time to help parents improve their English. Rotating study groups are used to do exercises in reading and grammar, along with computer labs to aid the literacy program. The program provides family support by including childcare and family activities at dinner during each meeting.

Food Brings Hope collaborates with Daytona State College where parents now have the opportunity to explore GED and Adult Education Programs. Featured program participant, Mr. Ruben Renteria, addressed an audience of more than 700 attendees at the event. Joining Ruben on stage was his wife, Tania and their four children. Mr. Renteria spoke highly of Mrs. Hosseini and the organization for the support provided to him and his family. He expressed his gratitude for the program's establishment in the Pierson area. "My children often make fun of my English so I enrolled in the program to learn to communicate better. I want to show my children that they can dream big dreams and can do great things," shared Ruben.

Mrs. Hosseini noted, "Mr. Renteria is an excellent role model. He did an amazing job representing Food Brings Hope at the Celebration of Reading event. He and his family had an opportunity to meet Governor Jeb Bush who took the time to ask about their experience in the program. Ruben has set very high expectations for himself and his entire family. He joined the program last year

and currently is enrolled in the GED program. He plans to enroll at DSC after attaining his GED. He aims to open his own business with the mission of giving back to his community. Ruben encouraged his wife to join the literacy program this year. Their older children are enrolled at FBH's KidsZone program at Pierson Elementary.”

Since establishing the program in Pierson, the literacy program has experienced tremendous growth for participation and is continuing to thrive in the Pierson community. For further information on how to become a participant in the program, please visit www.FoodBringsHope.org.

About Food Brings Hope

Food Brings Hope (FBH), a 501(c)(3) Public Charity, provides collaborative solutions for families with children who experience hunger due to homelessness, poverty, or unfamiliarity with community resources. FBH's mission is to nurture the mind, body and spirit of underprivileged children in our community. Among other services, **FBH** offers school based programs (termed **KidsZone** in elementary schools and **TeenZone** in the upper grades) that provide meals, tutoring and activities for at-risk students. FBH also facilitates enrichment activities such as Nutrition Days and Hands On Banking Programs along with field trips to local educational destinations and events. At FBH, 100% of all donations go directly to the programs that support students in need.

For more information about Food Brings Hope, please visit www.FoodBringsHope.org or contact Shelley Brathwaite, Program Coordinator, at (386)843-1161 or Shelley@FoodBringsHope.org.