



Dream Come True: Young Girl from San Juan Wins National Singing Competition

June 25, 2009

Joins Celebrity Artists to Sing Special Song That Benefits Save the Children and Celebrates the Love. Hugs. Peace. Movement

HOLLYWOOD--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jun. 25, 2009-- Eleven-year-old Itzel Figueroa Jacinto of San Juan, Puerto Rico delighted a panel of celebrity and music industry judges including Debbie Allen, Chaka Khan, Kevin Gore, executive vice president of Rhino Records, and Tena Clark, founder of DMI Music & Media Solutions, to win the "Let's Talk About Love" Singing Contest sponsored by Build-A-Bear Workshop® at the Hollywood & Highland Center in Los Angeles on Wednesday, June 24.

Impressing judges with her incredible voice and stage presence, Itzel wins \$10,000 for her efforts and the opportunity of a lifetime to join the ranks of David Archuleta of "American Idol" fame, GRAMMY® award winner Natalie Cole, *Camp Rock's* Meaghan Martin, and Jamia Nash of "August Rush" acclaim by becoming the next artist to professionally record "Let's Talk About Love," the signature song for the Love. Hugs. Peace.™ movement. Just like the singing sensations before her, Itzel is now part of the Love. Hugs. Peace.™ campaign that encourages young people like herself to be kind and helps raise money for Save the Children, an international non-profit organization that works to promote a healthy environment and literacy among disadvantaged children.

"When I sing 'Let's Talk About Love,' and record it, I am happy because I can help the Save the Children organization assist kids," said Itzel. "It is really great to be able to help."

Itzel's version of "Let's Talk About Love" will be featured online at www.buildabear.com/lovehugspeace and buildabearville.com. Guests can visit either website or any participating Build-A-Bear Workshop store and receive a free download card of "Let's Talk About Love" performed by Itzel or any one of the other artists as a thank you for a \$1 donation to Save the Children. Each participating artist brings a unique style and rhythm to the song so, while the message of sharing, love and kindness remains the same, the tune appeals to fans of all ages and musical tastes. Additional artists are set to jump on board as the movement continues throughout the remainder of the year.

Itzel was one of five finalists selected by public vote on buildabear.com and buildabearville.com to advance to the live auditions in Los Angeles. Other contestants included Leah Kolchinsky, age 12, San Jose, California; Claire Piorkowski, age 11, Cincinnati, Ohio; Sean Sonogo, age 16, Edmonton, Canada and Melissa Vega, age 18, Roosevelt, NY. In addition to the contest finalists showcasing their talents before the judging panel, event highlights included dance and song performances by the Debbie Allen Dance Academy Troop, Jamia Nash, and the famous Latin boy band, Menudo, plus entertainment by hosts from Radio Disney.

The Love. Hugs. Peace. movement empowers young people to make the world a better place one small act of kindness at a time. Whether pledging to volunteer at an animal shelter, recycle, do something nice for friends or family, raise money for a special cause, or pick up litter in their communities, young people are accepting the challenge to make a difference. Since the program launched in January, nearly 200,000 kids from around the world have made a love, hugs or peace pledge and more than \$120,000 has been raised for Save the Children. Visit www.buildabear.com/lovehugspeace for more information.

Contest Background

Singers were encouraged to enter the “Let’s Talk About Love” Singing Contest from March 16 through April 14, 2009, by submitting a solo video audition accompanied by a choice of three instrumental versions of the song, “Let’s Talk About Love.” A cappella submissions also were welcome. Video submissions were accepted online or via mail and contestants were judged on vocal abilities, talent, performance, and creativity. Ten semi-finalists were selected and the public was asked to vote for their favorites at buildabear.com and buildabearville.com. Five finalists advanced and each won a two night/three day trip to the live auditions in Los Angeles to perform before the public and a panel of celebrity and music industry judges who decided which talented Grand Prize Winner received \$10,000 and got to be the next artist to professionally record “Let’s Talk About Love” at DMI’s Firehouse Recording Studios in Los Angeles. The winner’s rendition of the song will benefit Save the Children. The winner also will make an appearance on “The Chloe Show,” the celebrity interview segment featured in buildabearville.com®, the Build-A-Bear Workshop virtual world.

About Build-A-Bear Workshop

Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc. is the leading and only global company that offers an interactive make-your-own stuffed animal retail-entertainment experience. Founded in 1997, the Company and its franchisees currently operate more than 400 Build-A-Bear Workshop stores worldwide, including company-owned stores in the United States, Puerto Rico, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland and France, and franchise stores in Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa. In 2007, the interactive experience was enhanced - all the way to CyBEAR™ space - with the launch of buildabearville.com®, the company’s virtual world stuffed with fun. The company was named to the 2009 FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For® list. Build-A-Bear Workshop (NYSE: BBW) posted total revenue of \$468 million in fiscal 2008. For more information, call 888.560.BEAR (2327) or visit the company’s award-winning Web site at www.buildabear.com.

About Save the Children

Save the Children reaches girls and boys in the United States and more than 120 countries. The contribution being made to Save the Children through the Build-A-Bear Workshop Love. Hugs. Peace. movement will support its immediate and long-term programs that help ensure children are protected, healthy and well-nourished, learn and develop, and live in food-secure and economically viable households. For more information, visit www.savethechildren.org.

TRADEMARKS

We would like to thank you for your interest in covering our business. As you write your story, we would ask that you use our full name: **Build-A-Bear Workshop®** and that when referencing the process of making stuffed animals you use the word “**make**” not “**build**.”

Build-A-Bear Workshop is our well-known trade name and our registered trademark of **Build-A-Bear Retail Management, Inc. Build-A-Bear Workshop®** should only be used in capital letters to refer to our products and services and should not be used as a verb.

Note: Parental permission may be required to access buildabearville.com. Visit buildabearville.com for details.

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available: <http://www.businesswire.com/cgi-bin/mmg.cgi?eid=5994586&lang=en>

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