



News Release

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For immediate release

Belk Donates \$300,000 in Education Funds for Tuscaloosa Tornado Recovery Donation, like semiannual Charity Sale, part of the Belk commitment to its store communities

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – December 7, 2011 – Belk today presented a check for \$300,000 to the City of Tuscaloosa to help city and county schools hardest hit by April’s tornadoes. Alberta Elementary School, University Place Elementary School, University Place Middle School, and Holt Elementary School will each receive \$50,000, for a total of \$200,000. The City of Tuscaloosa Recovery Fund will receive \$100,000, designated for education.

“Belk is honored to be able to help the Tuscaloosa community and the many families whose lives were affected by this devastating event,” said Jessica Graham, vice-president of communications and community relations for Belk, Inc. “The well-being of a community’s schools is vital to everyone, and we believe that, as a corporate partner, we at Belk must help ensure the recovery of Tuscaloosa’s city and county educational systems.”

According to Graham, community involvement and charity have been an essential part of Belk since it was founded 123 years ago. Belk’s rich heritage of philanthropy dates back to the company’s founders who believed strongly in the importance of giving back to the communities that made the success of their company possible. One of Belk’s major community initiatives is its semi-annual Charity Sale, for which non-profits sell tickets to a private shopping event and keep the proceeds from ticket sales. November’s Charity Sale benefited more than 7,700 charities from throughout the Belk 16-state footprint and helped raise more \$20,000 for Tuscaloosa area nonprofits including Arts ‘n Autism, Disabled American Vets, American Legion, Tuscaloosa County High Band, Central High School Cheerleaders and Easter Seals of West Alabama.

“We are truly grateful for the kindness and sincerity from the entire Belk team for this generous donation,” said Tuscaloosa Mayor Walt Maddox. “This gift will support the rebuilding and reestablishment of our schools in the affected storm communities and will ensure that the resilient spirit of Tuscaloosa be carried on through the coming generations. It is through the unrelenting support of others that inspires our community to persevere as we continue to rebuild Tuscaloosa.”

“This donation by Belk, Inc. is just another example of how members of the community have demonstrated their care for our schools and children,” said Dr. Paul McKendrick, Tuscaloosa City Schools superintendent. “I can’t thank them enough for their generous gift and for their commitment to the City of Tuscaloosa. We will use the funds for instructional materials and equipment and to provide support for our children who struggle to cope with the tragedy of that day.”

“In the aftermath of the terrible tragedy that struck the Tuscaloosa Community on April 27th taking lives, separating families and destroying homes and schools, it is evident that Belk has joined with agencies across the state and nation to provide helping hands to our students and employees in the Tuscaloosa County School System,” said Tuscaloosa County Schools Superintendent Dr. Frank Costanzo. “On behalf

of the Tuscaloosa County Board of Education, and all faculty, staff members and students of Holt Elementary School, I thank you for this generous financial donation”

“The citizens of Tuscaloosa have supported Belk for so many years,” said Jan Clevenger, chair of the Western Division of Belk. “The April tornadoes touched all of us in the company because we knew so many of our loyal customers and employees were among those affected. We’re thankful for this opportunity to help.”

About Belk, Inc.

Charlotte, N.C.-based Belk, Inc. (www.belk.com) is the nation's largest privately owned mainline department store company with 303 Belk stores located in 16 Southern states. The company was founded in 1888 by William Henry Belk in Monroe, N.C., and is in the third generation of Belk family leadership. Belk.com offers a wide assortment of fashion apparel, shoes and accessories for the entire family along with top-name cosmetics, a wedding registry and a large selection of quality merchandise for the home. To connect with Belk via Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blog, mobile phone, text messages or by email, go to [Belk Get Connected](#).

Modern. Southern. Style.

Belk seeks to satisfy the modern Southern lifestyle like no one else, so that our customers get the fashion they desire and the value they deserve. Our vision is for the modern Southern woman to count on Belk first - for her, for her family, for life.

About the City of Tuscaloosa Schools.

The Tuscaloosa City Schools is an urban public school system serving more than 10,000 students in Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. Students attend 13 elementary schools, six middle schools and three high schools across the City of Tuscaloosa, Ala. Additionally, programs are offered to students seeking career and technical education and to those with disabilities. The Mission of the Tuscaloosa City Board of Education is to create and support a culture of high expectations for all students to achieve personal and academic excellence. More information can be found online at www.tuscaloosacityschools.com

About Tuscaloosa County Schools.

Since 1871, the Tuscaloosa County School System has provided educational opportunities for its students, who currently number almost 18,000 attending 33 individual schools. The system’s goal is to prepare these young people for their first big step into an adult world, a world that demands self-discipline and social skills as well as academic and work skills.

About the City of Tuscaloosa Storm Recovery Fund.

The mission of Tuscaloosa’s Storm Recovery Fund is to aid the long-term recovery efforts in the City of Tuscaloosa and surrounding communities in the aftermath of the devastating April 27, 2011 tornado. The City of Tuscaloosa Storm Recovery Fund supports five (5) critical needs: Public Services; Parks and Green Spaces; Education; Social Services; and Public Infrastructure. For more information, please visit www.tuscaloosafoward.com.

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