



SCHOOL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Barefoot Coach Issues Challenge to Get Shoes Donated for Children in Need

West Columbia, SC — Today, Glenforest School Head Coach William Knopf took to the airwaves and challenged coaches and sports reporters across South Carolina to join him, and coaches across the country, in going barefoot to raise awareness about the millions of children who are without shoes. An estimated 300 million children in America and across the globe walk around shoeless every day, exposing themselves to injury and disease.

Emmanuel “Manny” Ohonme, founder and CEO of Samaritan’s Feet, joined the radio interviews by phone to help Knopf and Glenforest School Head Chris Winkler promote the effort. Ohonme, who is originally from Nigeria, grew up poor and received his first pair of shoes at the age of 9 from a missionary who also taught him how to play basketball. Ohonme eventually earned a scholarship to play basketball at the University of North Dakota -- Lake Region. After completing graduate school and working at a logistics company for 10 years, Ohonme founded Samaritan’s Feet in 2003 to dedicate his life to the mission of helping children in need.

Besides raising awareness, Knopf and Glenforest students hope to raise donations of at least 300 pairs of new children’s shoes as a part of the national *Shoes of Hope* campaign sponsored by the nonprofit Samaritan’s Feet. Last year, Knopf worked with students to organize their debut campaign at the West Columbia school, which yielded 212 pairs of donated shoes and over \$200 for Samaritan’s Feet. Knopf said the small school of fewer than 100 students, their families and members of the community jumped right in to support the cause.

“We are not strangers to service at Glenforest, but this is a cause that has become close to our hearts. Although our students have learning differences and challenges of their own, they understand the importance of looking beyond themselves to help others in need,” said Knopf.

This year, Knopf says he will coach every game barefoot until the school reaches its goal. Through radio and TV interviews and email, he is issuing the challenge to coaches at all levels throughout South Carolina and sports reporters to take off their shoes, get on their bare feet and join the cause.

“My hope is that this year coaches, athletic directors, and sportscasters all across the state will join us to help South Carolina make one of the largest contributions ever to

Samaritan's Feet. Coaches can help make a great statement to students as well as the entire community about the importance and value of serving others," Knopf added.

Next Tuesday, Jan. 12., Knopf will kick off the campaign by standing outside the school barefoot in frigid temperatures to greet students and parents in the car-rider line at Glenforest School. He and students will pass out flyers to encourage shoe donations and invite families to attend the boys varsity home game that evening at 7:15 p.m., where Knopf and students will go barefoot to further promote the cause.

Knopf added, "Every child deserves the safety and protection of having shoes on their feet. Knowing that we can do something as simple as going barefoot to get the whole state involved in caring for children in need is absolutely incredible!"

The public is invited to join the campaign by bringing donations of new children's shoes to the Glenforest School for Samaritan's Feet. Donors also have the option of giving online at www.SamaritansFeet.org or using mobile phones to text the word "SHOES" to 85944 to donate \$5 to Samaritan's Feet. Just one \$5 donation can provide a pair of shoes for a deserving child.

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Samaritan's Feet is a non-profit organization dedicated to changing lives through Shoes of Hope distributions around the world. About 300 million people wake up each morning without a pair of shoes to protect their feet from injury and disease. The goal of Samaritan's Feet is to provide shoes to 10 million of these individuals in the next 10 years. To learn more, visit online at www.SamaritansFeet.org.

Glenforest School is dedicated to serving and educating children with learning differences, helping them to draw on their unique strengths and to persevere in the midst of their challenges. Glenforest serves students who struggle with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Central Auditory Processing Disorder, dyslexia and other learning issues. Our success rests in our ability to acknowledge that since children learn differently, we must teach differently. To learn more about Glenforest, visit online at www.Glenforest.org.

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