



# Media Alert

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**Disney Awards \$4.5 Million to Support Kids in Central Florida  
More than 102 central Florida organizations including the  
Early Learning Coalition of Lake County.**

**ORLANDO**, Fla., March 30, 2015 – Local community groups took center stage at the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts today as Walt Disney World Resort awarded more than \$4.5 million in Disney Grants, which will enable the organizations to play an even stronger supporting role for more than 250,000 Central Florida children and their families. The Early Learning Coalition of Lake County was among the group of 102 nonprofits and schools districts that received \$4.5 million in grants through the *Disney Helping Kids Shine* Grants program. This initiative from Walt Disney World Resort supports organizations that help build strong futures for children in Central Florida.

Through the support provided by Disney's signature giving program, the grants will help local organizations build children's character, encourage creativity and promote economic development throughout Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Lake and Polk counties. This year's grant recipients offer an array of programs, including learning and reading camps, arts enrichment and furniture and clothes for families in need.

"We're proud to support the Early Learning Coalition of Lake County which shares Disney's dedication to investing in Central Florida's children and families," said Nancy Gidusko, director of Corporate Citizenship for Walt Disney World Resort. "For more than 43 years, Disney has teamed with local organizations to help shape a bright future for our communities."

*Disney Helping Kids Shine* grants are expected to enrich the lives of an estimated 70,000 children in Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Polk counties, through programs that include summer camps, theatre groups, music education, food, shelter and counseling. As a part of this year's recognition ceremony, Disney announced two special gifts — a \$250,000 donation to the Boys and Girls Club of Lake and Sumter Counties to build a permanent facility in that community, and a \$100,000 gift to the Boys and Girls Club Walt Disney World Clubhouse in Pine Hills to expand its kitchen that provides meals to more than 100 kids each day.

The Early Learning Coalition of Lake County is privileged to be a recipient of the Disney grant for the "Raising A Reader" program. The Raising A Reader program is very important for our young children as they prepare for kindergarten. It not only encourages parents to read to their children but it also strengthens the bond between children and parents and makes reading FUN. This program is operated throughout the country and has proven to be successful in preparing children for kindergarten. Lake County's 2015 award recipients include the Early Learning Coalition of Lake County and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Lake and Sumter Counties.

For more information about the Early Learning Coalition of Lake County and its services, visit the website at [www.elclc.org](http://www.elclc.org) or call (352) 435-0566.

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