

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Tammy Mitchel, Haring Center Assistant Director of Development

Office: [206.543.4011](tel:206.543.4011)

Fax: [206.221.3868](tel:206.221.3868)

eventeeu@uw.edu

www.HaringCenter.Washington.edu

Whole Foods Market helps the Experimental Education Unit at the University of Washington Eat, Grow and Thrive with \$12,000 donation



Seattle, WA (September 30, 2011) – Whole Foods Market presented a \$12,000 check to the University of Washington's Experimental Education Unit (EEU) this week to help keep EEU students eating the freshest and most nutritional food possible during school hours.

Whole Foods Markets in the Puget Sound region partnered with the EEU on a commemorative student art bag project to raise funds for the donation. EEU students from birth to kindergarten created compelling, "Seattle inspired" art which was then printed on reusable bags and sold in all regional stores this past April.

"We are just really excited that we have such a great community partner and that this relationship will continue," said EEU principal Chris Matsumoto. "It's really fun to be

walking around Seattle and see people carrying those bags that our students helped make."

In all EEU classrooms, children with special needs work directly alongside their typically developing peers, at no cost to families.

The donation allows the EEU to vastly improve the quality of fresh fruits and vegetables, and focus on nutritional lunch and snacks for growing brains and bodies of children from birth through kindergarten, with and without disabilities. The project was an opportunity to incorporate art, nutrition and education in the classroom, while sparking excitement and arousing awareness in the community about a vital service and critical message about the importance of inclusive education.

"It wasn't just EEU parents and staff that came in and bought bags to make this possible, but it was the regional stores and the thousands of Seattle Whole Foods shoppers that helped it along," said David Hulbert, Whole Foods Market Marketing & Merchandising Coordinator for Washington and British Columbia. "And we're happy to be able to continue with our longest running partnership."

For more than seven years, Whole Foods Market has provided in-kind food and products for the EEU's largest annual fundraiser, a 600-person auction held at the school each May. Additionally, the company continues to be involved through visiting the school, providing nutrition guidance and healthy snack options with a special focus on developing creative meal alternatives for gluten-free and casein-free snacks for families and students with dietary restrictions.

About the EEU

The Experimental Education Unit (EEU) at the University of Washington is a comprehensive early childhood center providing inclusive educational services and family support for more than 220 children with and without disabilities, from birth through kindergarten. All programs encourage the development of children's cognitive, physical, communication, social and emotional skills by emphasizing educational and therapeutic interventions that are geared to each child's individual needs. In addition to providing direct service for today's students, EEU classrooms serve as real-world models for professional training and practical research. All programs are offered at no cost to families.

About Whole Foods Market®

Founded in 1980 in Austin, Texas, Whole Foods Market (wholefoodsmarket.com, NASDAQ: WFM), is the leading natural and organic food retailer. As America's first national certified organic grocer, Whole Foods Market was named "America's Healthiest Grocery Store" by Health magazine. The company's motto, "Whole Foods, Whole People, Whole Planet"™ captures its mission to ensure customer satisfaction and health, Team Member excellence and happiness, enhanced shareholder value, community support and environmental improvement. Thanks to the company's nearly 60,000 Team Members, Whole Foods Market has been ranked as one of the "100 Best Companies to Work For" in America by FORTUNE magazine for 14 consecutive years. In fiscal year 2010, the company had sales of more than \$9 billion and currently has more than 300 stores in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.