



NEWS

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**PIZZA HUT GRANTS \$30,000 TO STORYBOOK THEATRE
FOR CHILDREN'S MEDIA CENTER**

HANAPEPE (July 7, 2003) – Storybook Theatre will open a Children's Media Center this summer with a \$30,000 grant from the Hawaii Pizza Hut Literacy Fund that will be used for the center's debut literacy project, "Let's Tell A Story." The year-long literacy based story-writing and media creation program is designed for youth classes with children ages 4-8 years and will offer opportunities for the hands-on creation of short story videos featuring stories, characters, puppets, music and costumes created by each class.

"The opening of the Children's Media Center is the culmination of seven years of work by our staff and board members, and its gratifying to have the support of our sponsors to take us to this next level," said Mark Jeffers, Executive Director of the Storybook Theatre of Hawaii. "We'll be partnering with about 10 preschools and elementary schools around Kauai to help young children write stories, create the characters and costumes, practice performing, and then we'll bring each class to the center for a full media creation session that will culminate in a short video."

Jeffers added that the program will give young children a creative and interactive venue for developing important literacy-based skills in story writing, character

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development, acting, directing and media-related technology. “At the same time,” Jeffers commented, “the ‘Let’s Tell a Story’ program will foster a sense of a pride and self-esteem in young children as they participate in the creation of a professional video that they can share with teachers, family and friends.”

Founded in Honolulu in 1979, the nonprofit Storybook Theatre has become one of Hawaii’s premiere performing arts organizations and has reached as many 25,000 students each year through live school and community performances throughout the state. The organization has since expanded to offer television, radio and other media productions that focus on cultural literacy and language development while providing unique entertainment opportunities for children and their families.

Pizza Hut Hawaii, a kama’aina company since 1971, has 46 locations in Hawaii, 5 in Guam and 1 in Saipan. Pizza Hut Hawaii is a strong advocate for literacy, and since 1992, the company has successfully raised more than \$3,000,000 for Hawaii literacy programs through its popular “Carryout for Literacy” campaign.

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