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OFFICE DEPOT FOUNDATION WELCOMES NATIONAL LEADERS TO SYMPOSIUM ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURE OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR

'Weekend in Boca' Supports Foundation's Initiatives to Strengthen Nonprofit Organizations

Delray Beach, Fla., December 13, 2007 – Approximately 45 key leaders from business, government and the civil society (nonprofit) sector will convene in Boca Raton, Fla., from December 13 to 15 for a high-level retreat focused on ways to encourage collaboration in community development and explore new strategies to strengthen nonprofit organizations in the 21st century. The gathering is being presented by the [Office Depot Foundation](#) – the independent foundation serving as the primary charitable giving arm of Office Depot (NYSE:ODP)

Dubbed the "Weekend in Boca," the three-day program supports one of the strategic priorities in the Office Depot Foundation's "5 X 5 Program:" Helping civil society/nonprofit organizations become more professional and productive. The symposium includes two components:

First, in collaboration with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Business Civic Leadership Center (BCLC), the Foundation is hosting the **Corporate Community Investment Forum: South Florida**, which will bring together a wide range of nonprofit, business and intellectual thought leaders from South Florida and around the nation. This group will examine critical issues in local community development as well as discuss strategies and best practices for ways in which the business community can provide leadership in this important area. The program will be facilitated by Stephen Jordan, Senior Vice President and Executive Director of BCLC.

"Our research shows that supporting community development is a top priority for many companies," Jordan states. "In this era of scarce resources, we need to become more strategic about helping our communities grow. We greatly appreciate the Office Depot Foundation's assistance in enabling us to explore these important issues in South Florida."

The second component of the Weekend in Boca is the **Office Depot Foundation Civil Society Leadership Symposium**. Invited guests, including senior executives of leading service providers, foundations, policy innovators, thought leaders, public officials and corporate executives, will participate in wide-ranging discussions about preparing the civil society sector to meet the challenges of the future. This session will be facilitated by Steven A. Rochlin, Head of AccountAbility North America, which is presenting the symposium in conjunction with the Foundation and BCLC. AccountAbility and the Office Depot Foundation plan to issue a report based on the outputs from the retreat in February 2008.

“Civil Sector Organizations (CSOs) face unprecedented opportunities and risks. Increasingly, they deliver vital public services, serve as the new route for citizen participation in politics and policy, and increasingly provide goods and services normally delivered by for-profit companies,” Rochlin explains. “By convening a community of leaders passionate about preparing the Civil Sector to meet the challenges of the future, the Office Depot Foundation is making a remarkably important contribution.”

Among the Weekend in Boca’s participants will be Jay F. Hein, Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, who will speak at a luncheon on December 14. His remarks are entitled, “Can We Work Together Better for Our Common Good and Mutual Interest?”

“At the Office Depot Foundation, we recognize that the challenges of community development and nonprofit capacity-building are best approached through collaboration among many different individuals and organizations,” explains Mary Wong, President of the Foundation. “We are pleased to bring this group of distinguished individuals together for discussions that promise to be both enlightening and inspiring.”

About the Office Depot Foundation

The Office Depot Foundation is an independent foundation that serves as the primary charitable giving arm of Office Depot. In keeping with its mission, Listen Learn Care, the Foundation strives to make a positive impact on many lives in many communities around the world. The Foundation supports a variety of programs that enhance the quality of life for children, strengthen communities, encourage local and global economic growth, and empower schools and nonprofit organizations. It also provides support when disasters strike – doing what it can not only to speed the process of rebuilding, but also to mitigate the impact of future disasters. For more information about the [Office Depot Foundation](#), visit www.officedepotfoundation.org.

About the Business Civic Leadership Center

BCLC is a 501(c)(3) affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and serves as a resource and voice for businesses and their social and philanthropic interests. It is the Chamber's lead agency for corporate disaster assistance issues. The U.S. Chamber is the world's largest business federation representing more than 3 million business and organizations of every size, sector and region. Visit www.uschamber.com/bclc.

About AccountAbility

AccountAbility is a nonprofit, membership organization established in 1995 to promote accountability innovations that advance responsible business practices, and the broader accountability of civil society and public organizations. AccountAbility works with leading businesses and other organizations that are committed to becoming more accountable. It develops tools and standards for organizational accountability which drive performance and enable people to have a voice in the decisions that affect them. For further information please visit www.accountability21.net.

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