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**Opossums, wallabies, & tarantulas crawl into Children's Hospital to kick-off \$300,000 donation from Desert Schools**

*Students at One Darn Cool School Will Learn Lessons in ZOOlogy & Giving Back*

PHOENIX, Ariz. (January 9th, 2008) Visiting hedgehogs, tarantulas, and wallabies for most kids takes place at the local zoo, but Phoenix Children's Hospital is bringing the zoo to hospitalized patients. One Darn Cool School has 2 lessons prepared for January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008. The first lesson includes a hands on ZOOlogy presentation from Southwest Wildlife Rehabilitation. The second important lesson for patients at Phoenix Children's Hospital is the lesson of giving back.

Desert Schools Federal Credit Union has worked tirelessly to raise over **\$300,000 for One Darn Cool School**. Phoenix Children's is one of only a few hospitals in the nation that employs its own teaching staff. The hospital's One Darn Cool School is supported through the annual commitment to Phoenix Children's Hospital by Arizona's credit unions. Credit Unions for Kids is part of a national fund-raising program developed by Children's Miracle Network.

Donations from Arizona's credit unions provide for teacher salaries, books, computers, internet access and all needed school supplies. Phoenix Children's One Darn Cool School employs four masters level, certified special education teachers to provide classroom and bedside teaching to Hospital patients (grades K-12). In addition, the Hospital provides a re-entry specialist to work with patients' families and the child's regular teacher to assist children when they make the transition back to their regular classroom.

On Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, **Desert Schools Federal Credit Union will present a check for more than \$300,000 to One Darn Cool School**. Desert Schools' senior vice president Ron Amstutz said, "The Children's Miracle Network has been the cornerstone of our fundraising efforts for nearly a decade. Our members and employees see the impact their donations make locally and show remarkable generosity."

Amstutz is the champion for Children's Miracle Network & Phoenix Children's Hospital and leads the fundraising efforts at Desert Schools. Ron first became involved with Phoenix Children's in 1998 when his son spent several weeks undergoing treatment for Guillain-Barre Syndrome. Today, his son is healthy, but the ordeal fueled his passion to give back. Since then, he and Desert Schools have been steadfast in their commitment to support Phoenix Children's and the One Darn Cool School.

Desert Schools, Arizona's largest credit union, has contributed more than \$1 million to Phoenix Children's Hospital since 1999. Funds are raised through a variety of events including branch change drives, a bowl-a-thon, employee barbecue and the 2007CMN Golf Tournament which raised \$175,000 for the hospital—one of the largest amounts raised in a single day for a credit union.

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Not only is Desert Schools the top credit union in fundraising for Phoenix Children's, but in 2007 Desert Schools' raised more money for Credit Unions for Kids than any credit union in the country. Desert Schools' support makes it possible for the hospital's school team to provide the wildlife experience and other educational programs and services to the patients at Phoenix Children's.

**About Phoenix Children's Hospital**

Phoenix Children's Hospital is Arizona's leader in pediatric care and is one of the 10 largest free-standing children's hospitals in the nation. The most comprehensive array of pediatric specialists in the State practice at this one organization. The outstanding clinical expertise, as well as high patient volume, and an unwavering commitment to caring only for children, all contribute to Children's leadership position. For information about Phoenix Children's, visit the Hospital's award-winning website at [www.phoenixchildrens.com](http://www.phoenixchildrens.com).

**About Desert Schools Federal Credit Union**

Desert Schools is Arizona's largest credit union with \$3 billion in assets, 350,000 members and 64 locations. As a not-for-profit cooperative, Desert Schools has been serving members since 1939 with stellar service, innovative products, community outreach and education. Learn more at [desertschools.org](http://desertschools.org).