

## NEWS

### Jill's House Receives Donation from Walmart Foundation



*Walmart donates to support Weeknights at Jill's House for local students with special needs.*

Jill's House received a \$33,200 grant through the Walmart Foundation's State Giving Program to support the Weeknights at Jill's House program, a special partnership with area local schools that provides children with special needs recurring overnight respite care and enrichment activities during the week. In 2014, this program alone provided 21,000 hours of

care. No center in the world provides more overnight respite to families affected by intellectual disability than Jill's House.

Jill's House is a non-profit organization that provides support for families raising children ages 6 through 17 who have intellectual disabilities. It provides short-term overnight care and activities designed specifically for children with special needs, offering worry-free breaks from caregiving to their families.

Jill's House opened its doors in 2010. Since then, its staff and volunteers have provided nearly 500,000 hours of respite care and served more than 500 families. Of the children enjoying overnight stays, 50% have autism, 20% have Down syndrome, 20% have other diagnoses such as brain injury or cerebral palsy and 10% have other chromosomal abnormalities.

Weeknights at Jill's House improves and enriches the lives of children with special needs through physical, social and enrichment activities. During their stay, children are guided through specifically designed activities such as pet therapy, therapeutic art, library visits, music, gym time, computer lab visits, and swimming. These programs help children build social and life skills, develop self-confidence, and grow toward greater independence. Round-the-clock medical supervision ensures the children have the care they need to thrive.

"We are grateful to Walmart for their generous gift and the impact they are making in our families' lives," said Cameron Doolittle, president and CEO of Jill's House. "The need for reliable overnight respite care is repeatedly cited as the most urgent unmet need of parents raising a child with special needs. Jill's House helps parents recharge so that they can be their best selves as parents and spouses."

As part of the grant opportunity, Walmart associates from the Tysons Corner, VA location volunteered as buddies at Jill's House for an afternoon, getting a unique experience in realizing the talents and gifts of each child with special needs. One associate shared, "Today really taught me how to better interact with my customers when they visit my store." The associate went on to share how this one family who has a child with special needs comes in every week for their groceries. "Now, thanks to this experience at Jill's House, I know how to make them feel more welcome and can better meet their needs."

"Walmart and the Walmart Foundation are pleased to support Jill's House and their Weeknights at Jill's House program," said Brooke Mueller, director of Public Affairs and Government Relations at Walmart. "This program is important because it allows children with special needs to be able to get the overnight care and enrichment activities they need."