



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Six Youths Helped by the Lazydays Homeless Youth Program Give Hope to Others During the Homeless Youth Forum

SEFFNER, Fla. - (July 9, 2012) – Last month, members of the Lazydays Employee Foundation were moved by the courage and determination of six youths during the Homeless Youth Forum. Presented by the Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County, this first-of-its-kind forum raised awareness for teen homelessness and youth in need.

The panel of homeless and previously homeless youth consisted of Amanda George, Laura Harris, Ronnieshia Hicks, Christopher Mack, Traci Waltz and Alexandria Williams, who have all been helped by the Lazydays Homeless Youth program. Thanks to the partnership of Eckerd and the Lazydays Employee Foundation, this program is able to provide services that help youth with accessing housing, educational opportunities, medical testing and treatment, financial aid, employment and other basic needs.

One of the highlights of the forum was when Governor Rick Scott signed House Bill 1351 that provides homeless youth, who are at least 16 years of age, the ability to get their birth certificates, necessary for identification, health care, school and work. This bill was drafted by students at Armwood High School, and sponsored by Senator Jack Latvala along with Representatives Rich Glorioso and Jim Frishe.

As of last year, there were 6,503 homeless youth in Florida and about 200 unaccompanied homeless youth in Hillsborough County who are under the age of 18. Although there are programs such as the Lazydays Homeless Youth program that provide unaccompanied homeless youth with the resources and assistance they need to escape homelessness, more housing and other resources are needed. By sharing their struggles and experiences, the six panelists expressed the importance of giving homeless youth more opportunities to become independent, contributing members of society.

The forum concluded with Wheels of Success awarding a car to Sean McCoggle Jr., another youth assisted by the Lazydays Homeless Youth program. The Lazydays Employee Foundation and the Triad Foundation provided the financial support for the car repairs and first-time auto tag fees to help Sean get on the road to success.

For more information, please visit us at <http://www.LazydaysEmployeeFoundation.org>, or like us on <http://www.facebook.com/LazydaysEmployeeFoundation>.

About Lazydays Employee Foundation

In 2005, the employees of Lazydays created the Lazydays Employee Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Today, over 70% of Lazydays employees contribute through voluntary payroll deduction to the Foundation. Administered solely by employees as volunteers, the Foundation has contributed more than \$1M to make many historic changes in the Tampa Bay community. Recognized for outstanding achievements in assisting the local at-risk youth population, the Lazydays Employee Foundation has also been featured on [Bay News 9](#) and [ABC Action News](#). The Foundation supports the Lazydays House at A Kid's Place, an emergency shelter for foster children recently removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. It also funds the Lazydays Homeless Youth Program, which provides unaccompanied, homeless youth with the resources needed to break the cycle of homelessness. In addition, the Lazydays Employee Foundation contributes to other local charities, including the R.I.C.H. House, the Ybor Youth Clinic, the Joshua House, Connected by 25 and Hillsborough Education Foundation, just to name a few.

Lazydays Employee Foundation Media Contact

Jordan Leonard

Info@LazydaysEmployeeFoundation.org

813-246-4999, ext. 4342