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**Smithfield Foods, Smithfield Packing To Help Prepare Lumberton  
High School Students for College**

*Learners to Leaders™ to Help Fund Robeson Community College  
Foundation Capital Campaign*

LUMBERTON, N.C. (June 5, 2008)—Smithfield Foods, Inc., The Smithfield Packing Company, Robeson Community College and the Public Schools of Robeson County joined forces on Wednesday to help prepare economically disadvantaged Lumberton-area high school students for college.

The Smithfield Foods Learners to Leaders™ program will fund a student development program for ninth through 12th graders at Lumberton-area high schools starting with the 2008-09 academic year.

Officials from Smithfield Foods and its subsidiary, The Smithfield Packing Company, presented a check for nearly \$75,000 to the Robeson Community College Foundation Wednesday evening during a reception at the Pinecrest Country Club.

C. Larry Pope, president and chief executive officer of Smithfield Foods, summarized his company's philosophy regarding the Learners to Leaders program in Lumberton.

"We have always been firm believers in giving back to our communities. We can think of no better way of bringing this commitment to life than helping Lumberton

students benefit from opportunities to both develop their leadership skills and improve academically,” Pope said.

The Learners to Leaders program in Lumberton is open to economically disadvantaged students and potential first-generation college students who will receive academic and social support. Students who complete the program and subsequently enroll at Robeson Community College will receive a \$1,000 scholarship for tuition and expenses and up to \$500 for books.

As part of the Lumberton Learners to Leaders program, students also will:

- Receive laptop computers and Internet access to complete school assignments and do research for special projects.
- Work with a “virtual mentor.” These will include local business professionals who provide the benefit of regular contact.
- Experience the real world of business and industry by taking guided field trips to nearby businesses.
- Attend quarterly leadership seminars covering topics such as small business, industry, government service, higher education, time management skills, good study habits and public speaking.

“The Smithfield Foods Learners to Leaders alliance is an invaluable tool to help Robeson County students fulfill their potential by properly preparing them for the rigors of higher education,” said Ericka Jones, foundation director for Robeson Community College. “We’re delighted that Smithfield Foods and Smithfield Packing are joining us in this worthwhile partnership.”

With eight programs in place since launching in 2006, Learners to Leaders is a national educational alliance that strengthens communities by providing individuals with learning opportunities that inspire them to become tomorrow's leaders. The alliance's goal is to help reinforce what organizers believe is the most critical part of any community's foundation, the education of its residents. Learners to Leaders is funded by the Smithfield-Luter Foundation and is made up of Smithfield Foods, its local operating companies and local educational partners.

“We’re excited about bringing this unique program to Lumberton because Smithfield Packing is always looking for ways to help local students get the extra boost they need to advance their educational pursuits beyond high school,” said Tim Schellpeper, president of Smithfield Packing. “In a few years the community will greatly benefit from their leadership skills.”

“Learners to Leaders and Robeson make a great team because we’re committed to giving these young people the opportunities they need to open doors that will lead to a bright future,” said Dennis Treacy, vice president of environmental and corporate affairs at Smithfield Foods. “Smithfield Foods believes that education is the cornerstone to success in any endeavor and ultimately helps build a thriving community.”

The Smithfield Packing Company has annual sales of more than \$3 billion. Its primary lines of business include fresh pork, smoked meats, bacon, cooked hams and hot dogs for retail, foodservice and deli channels. The company exports products to more than 30 countries. In addition to the Smithfield brand, its Gwaltney, Esskay and Valleydale products are among the leaders in their respective markets. The Smithfield Specialty Foods Group is home of the Genuine Smithfield Ham, The Peanut Shop of Williamsburg and other gourmet offerings.

Smithfield Foods is a global food company with operations in 13 countries through wholly-owned subsidiaries and joint ventures. Headquartered in Smithfield, Va., the company produces more than 50 brands of pork, beef and turkey products and more than 200 gourmet foods. Employing more than 57,000 people across the globe, Smithfield Foods is the world’s largest producer and processor of pork and a leader in turkey processing, cattle feeding and beef processing.

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The Smithfield Foods Learners to Leaders™ alliance presented a check for nearly \$75,000 to the Robeson Community College Foundation (RCCF) Wednesday at Pinecrest Country Club in Lumberton, N.C. Those participating in the check presentation included (L-R) Dr. Charles Chrestman, president of Robeson Community College; Jeff Gough, vice president of human resources for The Smithfield Packing Company; Dr. Linda Emanuel, assistant superintendent of the Public Schools of Robeson County; Tim Schellpeper, president of The Smithfield Packing Company; Dennis Treacy, vice president of environmental and corporate affairs for Smithfield Foods; Raymond Pennington, mayor of Lumberton; and Ericka Jones, foundation director for Robeson Community College. The Learners to Leaders program in Lumberton kicked off the RCCF's capital campaign and will fund scholarships to help Lumberton-area high school students attend the college.