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Contact:

Amy Richards
Charleston|Orwig, Inc.
Office: (262) 563-5100
Mobile: (262) 352-2446
arichards@charlestonorwig.com

**John Morrell Brings Smithfield Foods' Learners to Leaders™ Alliance
To Sioux Falls to Provide Educational Opportunities for Area Youth**

*Community educational partnership helps underprivileged
youth advance their education beyond high school*

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (December 5, 2006) – Smithfield Foods, through its independent operating company John Morrell, along with Sioux Falls School District (SFSD) and the Southeast Technical Institute (STI), today launched a partnership aimed at helping to close the gap that currently separates underprivileged high school students from a post-secondary education.

The community educational partnership will be driven by Learners to Leaders™, a new national educational alliance funded by Smithfield Foods and made up of Smithfield's independent operating companies and local educational partners. The alliance's goal is to help reinforce what the organizers believe is the most critical part of any community's foundation, the education of its youth.

The Sioux Falls program is the first Learners to Leaders project in the country. Similar programs will be launched in Iowa and Wisconsin soon, with additional partnerships to follow across the nation.

“We’re really excited about this project because Learners to Leaders will help our young people fulfill their potential through a post-secondary education,” said Steve Crim, vice president and general manager of the John Morrell facility in Sioux Falls.

“Education is the bedrock of any community or any society,” said Crim, who serves as the local Learners to Leaders liaison. “Thanks to the Smithfield Foods Learners to Leaders alliance, we are able to partner with the Sioux Falls educational community to give these students a chance to advance their education beyond high school. Without a program like this, these students probably would not get that opportunity.”

Through Learners to Leaders, the Sioux Falls School District will channel 25 qualified students into the business administration curriculum at Southeast Technical Institute, where the alliance will fund each student’s first year of STI’s two-year Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in business administration.

The students selected for the program in 2007 will come from any of Sioux Falls’ three mainstream public high schools — Lincoln, Washington and Roosevelt, along with Joe Foss, SFSD’s alternative high school. Once accepted into the program during their junior year, students will get the chance to take college-level courses that will count toward their high school diploma and the AAS degree from STI. Following their high school graduation, students will continue to pursue their business administration degree at the STI campus.

According to Dr. Pam Homan, superintendent of SFSD, the need for a program such as Learners to Leaders is critical. “We see students every day who just need a chance,” Homan said. “They often are kids who have special social, economic or academic challenges but are very eager to learn. Learners to Leaders will give them that one chance they need.”

Homan pointed out that exposing students to the rigors of academic life beyond high school is an added benefit of the Learners to Leaders program. A full-time staff member from SFSD and STI will be assigned to the program to give students adequate support as they pursue their degree.

“It is important for the students participating in the program to see the results from their hard work fairly quickly,” Homan said. “The students participating in Learners to Leaders will benefit greatly from the challenging STI academic environment and will be held to strict performance standards. However, they will see the progress that they are making and draw encouragement from that.”

Crim said the Smithfield Foods’ Learners to Leaders program benefits not only the students, but also the local business community.

“The students participating in Learners to Leaders will find the benefits of the program go beyond the classroom, in the form of both academic and practical business experiences,” Crim said. “Local businesses will have a fresh talent pool from which to draw. Everybody wins.”

Dennis Treacy, vice president of environmental and corporate affairs at Smithfield Foods, said John Morrell’s partnership with SFSD and STI is the perfect Learners to Leaders project.

“The staff at John Morrell has worked very hard to find the ideal program to help build a promising future for Sioux Falls by developing tomorrow’s leaders,” Treacy said. “A solid, successful educational framework makes any community a better place—a better place to live, raise a family, work and do business. All of our independent operating companies around the world are strong believers in giving back to the communities where we live and work.”

Smithfield Foods has delivered a 24 percent average annual compounded rate of return to investors since 1975. With sales of \$11 billion, Smithfield is the leading processor and marketer of fresh pork and processed meats in the United States, as well as the largest producer of hogs. For more information, visit www.smithfieldfoods.com.

John Morrell & Co., founded in 1827 in Liverpool, England, is a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods, Inc., of Smithfield, Va. John Morrell is headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio, and has

operations in Cincinnati; Great Bend, Kan.; Sioux City, Iowa; Des Moines, Iowa; San Jose, Calif.; Middlesboro, Ky.; Springdale, Ohio; and Sioux Falls, S.D. John Morrell is a broad-based supplier of fresh pork and processed meats to every segment of the market. Its products are marketed coast-to-coast under a dozen brand names, including the flagship John Morrell label. John Morrell is one of the leading producers of private-label meat products for retail chains and foodservice distributors, as well as the first meat company to establish a successful brand in the enhanced fresh pork category with the John Morrell Tender N Juicy[®] brand.

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