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**T.E.A.C.H. celebrates 10 years of helping to
improve workforce of early childhood education**

MARTIN COUNTY — This year, the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps Early Childhood's Scholarship Program, which helps to improve the education, compensation and retention of the early childhood work force, is celebrating 10 years of service in Florida.

Administered through the Children's Forum and funded through The Agency for Workforce Innovation-Office of Early Learning, T.E.A.C.H. provides scholarships for early care educators and center directors to work toward earning an associate's degree or credentials in early childhood education.

T.E.A.C.H. provides the majority of college tuition and books, but there is also a partnership for the sharing of expenses by the teacher receiving the scholarship and the sponsoring child care center or family child care home. T.E.A.C.H. participants receive a stipend for travel or internet access, three hours of paid release time while classes are in session and bonuses once their scholarship contract is complete. In turn, they agree to continue employment in their sponsoring early childhood facility for a specific period of time (typically one year).

In 2007, there were 209 T.E.A.C.H. participants in Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River Counties. To date, 22,084 T.E.A.C.H. scholarships have been awarded to 14,633 participants. Of these recipients, 5,683 have earned their Child Development Associate credential or equivalent and 435 have graduated with their associate's degree.

For more information about T.E.A.C.H, please call (877) FL-TEACH or visit www.thechildrensforum.com/teach.php