



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 15, 2008

CONTACTS:

Bill Evans, Trail Blazers, 503.797.9743

Melissa Logan, SMART, 503.937.4813

**YOUNG READERS SCORE BIG
WITH WELLS FARGO, TRAIL BLAZERS**

*\$20,000 will help Oregon kids get SMART
with one-on-one literacy support*

PORTLAND, OR – Wells Fargo and the Portland Trail Blazers have teamed up to provide funds that will help young students in Oregon get one-on-one literacy support through the nonprofit Start Making A Reader Today (SMART).

At halftime of tonight's Trail Blazers game at the Rose Garden, Wells Fargo and the Trail Blazers will present a \$20,000 check to SMART CEO Terry Shanley.

Wells Fargo donated \$250 to SMART for a "SMART Play of the Game" during Trail Blazers home games this season for a total of \$10,000. The Trail Blazers have matched the amount, resulting in the \$20,000 donation.

The "SMART Play of the Game" is featured on the Wells Fargo Big Screens at every Trail Blazers home game to generate awareness for Oregon's leading early literacy program.

Wells Fargo, repeatedly named one of the nation's most generous corporations, focuses a large percentage of its grants in Oregon on education. Wells Fargo has donated \$200 million in grants in the last two years to 14,000 schools and non-profit groups across the nation -- an average of \$266,000 every day.

"Wells Fargo recognizes the amazing work SMART does in communities throughout Oregon to increase literacy," said Alan Johnson, Wells Fargo's Oregon Regional President. "It's an assist that benefits and improves the lives of our children."

SMART's goal is to serve 11,600 K-3 children in 2007-08. Each child receives one hour of weekly, one-on-one literacy support and two new books each month. The \$20,000 donation will enable SMART to provide 66 children with one-on-one literacy support, as well as 14 books to take home and keep over the course of the school year.

"The Trail Blazers have been proud partners of SMART for more than a decade," said Traci Rose, Trail Blazers vice president of community relations. "From players and executives to front line staff, our organization has participated and seen first-hand how SMART is working for Oregon's young people. The program addresses one of the top priorities – literacy – necessary for children to succeed. We are thrilled to work alongside Wells Fargo in growing SMART's outreach."

Both Wells Fargo and the Trail Blazers have team members who volunteer for SMART. Each week during the school year, volunteers from both organizations read one-on-one with young Oregonians to inspire a love of reading.

To learn how to help, visit www.getsmartoregon.org, and Start Making A Reader Today.

ABOUT WELLS FARGO

Founded in 1852, Wells Fargo & Company is a diversified financial services company with \$575 billion in assets, providing banking, insurance, investments, mortgage and consumer finance through almost 6,000 stores and the internet (wellsfargo.com) across North America and internationally.

ABOUT SMART® (START MAKING A READER TODAY)

SMART is a nonprofit that envisions an Oregon where every child can read and is empowered to succeed. We engage community volunteers to read one-on-one with K-3 children who need literacy support. Participating children also receive new books each month to keep and read with their families. Since 1992, thousands of SMART volunteers have been inspiring little readers through storytelling. Together with support from the community, we are building brighter futures for Oregonians big and small. Volunteer or donate today. Visit www.getsmartoregon.org or call 1-877-598-4633.

ABOUT THE TRAIL BLAZERS

The Portland Trail Blazers, members of the National Basketball Association (NBA), were founded in 1970, and purchased by Paul G. Allen in 1988. The team's rich heritage includes 26 playoff appearances, an NBA championship in 1977 and a commitment to community service. With a corporate mission to "Make It Better," the Trail Blazers strive to help children and their families throughout Oregon and southwest Washington learn, play, grow, get involved and live healthier lives. The Trail Blazers are the first and only pro sports franchise to receive the prestigious National Points of Light Award for excellence in corporate community service. A long-time partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs of Portland led to the establishment of the Blazers Boys & Girls Club, the first team-sponsored club of its kind, and has resulted in contributions of more than \$1 million. The Albina Head Start McCormack-Matthews Center, which provides education and health services to preschoolers and their families, was established in 2004 with nearly \$1 million in contributions from Allen, the team, and former Trail Blazers star – and Portland native – Damon Stoudamire. For more information on the Trail Blazers visit www.trailblazers.com.

