

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 3, 2005

Contact:  
Sally McDonough  
(202) 452-7815  
sally.mcdonough@ogilvypr.com

## **Jones Apparel Group Pledges Long-Term Financial and Corporate Commitment to Non-Profit Organization and Announces Campaign to Support Teachers: Jones New York In The Classroom**

NEW YORK, NEW YORK (May 3, 2005) -- Jones Apparel Group, Inc. (NYSE: JNY) announced today, on National Teacher Day, the launch of its first corporate-wide cause program and the creation of Jones New York In the Classroom. This nationwide program aims to improve the quality of education for children through the recruitment, retention and support of teachers in America's public schools. Through this program, Jones Apparel Group commits not only dollars to support America's teachers, but expansive human resources as well. Jones Apparel Group's employee network, combined with the support of four leading national non-profit organizations, provides the strength needed to bring the program to life in communities across the country.

"This is Jones Apparel Group's investment in the future," said Peter Boneparth, President and Chief Executive Officer of Jones Apparel Group, Inc. "Teachers are essential to the success of our children, and Jones Apparel Group wants to take a leadership role in providing immediate and tangible help in the classroom, while encouraging others to join us along the way."

Experts predict that two million more new teachers will be needed over the next decade, while recent studies show that approximately one-third of the nation's teachers leave the profession during the first three years and almost half in the first five years. Research also confirms that not only are teachers the single most important factor in raising student achievement, but the ever-growing teacher shortage has challenged America's schools and has had a negative impact on the quality of education for America's most valuable resources-its children.

"We believe that if we appreciate the teacher, we in turn appreciate our children, which is exactly why Jones Apparel Group was inspired to

take up this cause," added Boneparth. Jones Apparel Group is taking a multi-faceted approach to supporting teachers at critical points in their careers, with a focus on four areas: recruitment, retention, professional development and recognition and support. Jones Apparel Group's long-term financial and corporate commitment to this cause both implements corporate programs to raise funds for Jones New York In The Classroom and allows employees paid time off to donate their time toward the initiative, including in cooperation with the following non-profit organizations: TeachersCount, New Teacher Academy, Fund for Teachers and Adopt-A-Classroom. Each of these groups addresses one or more of the Jones New York In The Classroom areas of focus.

Jones Apparel Group commissioned extensive market research with both their customers and their employees to determine what cause platform they chose. According to Stacy Lastrina, Senior Vice President of Marketing for Jones Apparel Group, "When we asked what issues are important, both employees and consumers lined up behind children and behind education as top priorities."

Importantly, the Jones Apparel Group commitment goes beyond its initial \$1 million grant to Jones New York In The Classroom. Specifically, Jones Apparel Group's corporate employees will be offered the opportunity to volunteer up to three hours of paid time off each month in local communities in support of teachers and education, totaling more than 250,000 hours to support the cause. Additionally, Jones Apparel Group will work with its retail partners to launch its in-store cause marketing program, including a limited edition t-shirt featuring artwork by New York City artist Ryan McGinness.

An additional sponsor for Jones New York In The Classroom is The Fruit Company, an online retailer of fine fruits and gourmet gift specialties based in Hood River, Oregon. The Fruit Company will donate 20 percent of its sales from gifts purchased on its Web site ([www.thefruitcompany.com](http://www.thefruitcompany.com)) with special promotional codes to Jones New York In the Classroom. Jones Apparel Group will use The Fruit Company as a preferred gift vendor for corporate gifts.

Additional activities of Jones New York In The Classroom include the formation of a national advisory committee comprised of education professionals; Back to School, Back to Style teacher and classroom

makeovers through a partnership with Home Depot and designer Michael Moloney; national advertising promotion supported by O, the Oprah magazine; a dedicated shopping week during which 10 percent of proceeds (up to \$500,000) will benefit the cause; and additional in-store "school-themed" events. The initiative will be launched in Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City and Washington, DC.

Jones New York In The Classroom is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of education in America and inspiring others, both individuals and corporations, to do the same through support of teachers and vital teacher-based programs. For more information on Jones New York In The Classroom and its activities, please visit [www.jnyintheclassroom.org](http://www.jnyintheclassroom.org).

Jones Apparel Group, Inc. ([www.jny.com](http://www.jny.com)), a Fortune 500 company, is a leading designer, marketer and wholesaler of branded apparel, footwear and accessories. We also market directly to consumers through our chain of specialty retail and value-based stores, and operate the Barneys chain of luxury stores. Our nationally recognized brands include Jones New York, Evan-Picone, Norton McNaughton, Gloria Vanderbilt, Erika, I.e.i., Energie, Nine West, Easy Spirit, Enzo Angiolini, Bandolino, Joan & David, Mootsies Tootsies, Sam & Libby, Napier, Judith Jack, Kasper, Anne Klein, Albert Nipon, Le Suit and Barneys New York. The Company also markets apparel under the Polo Jeans Company brand licensed from Polo Ralph Lauren Corporation, costume jewelry under the Tommy Hilfiger brand licensed from Tommy Hilfiger Licensing, Inc. and the Givenchy brand licensed from Givenchy Corporation and footwear under the Dockers Women brand licensed from Levi Strauss & Co. Each brand is differentiated by its own distinctive styling, pricing strategy, distribution channel and target consumer. We primarily contract for the manufacture of our products through a worldwide network of quality manufacturers. We have capitalized on our nationally known brand names by entering into various licenses for several of our trademarks, including Jones New York, Evan-Picone, Anne Klein New York, Nine West, Gloria Vanderbilt and I.e.i., with select manufacturers of women's and men's products which we do not manufacture. For more than 30 years, we have built a reputation for excellence in product quality and value, and in operational execution.

Jones Apparel Group retained The Leverage Group to guide the

development of this initiative. The Leverage Group is a global marketing consulting firm based in New York and Los Angeles that specializes in brand, cause and entertainment marketing.