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**First National Merchant Solutions and Saratoga Elementary  
Celebrate 10-Year Partnership**

(OMAHA, Neb. April 3, 2009) – Volunteers from First National Merchant Solutions (FNMS), the merchant processing division of First National Bank, joined the students and staff of Saratoga Elementary School, 2504 Meredith Avenue, this afternoon for a celebration of the educational partnership that FNMS has had with the school for the past 10 years.

“I am proud of the commitment of our company to this community, but am especially proud of the students and staff of Saratoga Elementary School,” said Diana Mehochko, president, First National Merchant Solutions. “During the ten years that we have been coming here, this school has made remarkable strides and student scores and performance have improved so much that Saratoga has grown from an academy to a fully qualified elementary school that competes with the rest of the Omaha Public Schools.”

Mehochko said that the program began in 1999 when the school was an academy with six FNMS “Breakfast Buddy” volunteers mentoring and helping students with reading before school. FNMS volunteers are now affiliated with the “Winners Circle” program founded by Jerry and Cookie Hoberman and are called “Goal Buddies.”

During the 10-year relationship, more than 50 FNMS volunteers have been involved, donating an estimated 400,000 hours to the program and nearly \$60,000 to the school, she said. Volunteer roles have included mentoring and tutoring students in Kindergarten through 6th grade in math, reading and citizenship goals. Funds raised by the FNMS volunteers have gone toward the school’s Bear Den, a “rejuvenation center” for students.

“Just like our company, we talk a lot about Saratoga’s ‘bottom line.’ When it comes to this school and these students, our bottom line is that no matter how much we think we are giving, we get so much more from them in return,” said Mehochko.

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First National Bank is a subsidiary of First National of Nebraska, Inc. First National of Nebraska has grown into the largest privately owned banking company in the United States. First National and its affiliates have \$21 billion in managed assets and nearly 7,000 employee associates located in 35 states. Primary banking offices are located in Nebraska, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, South Dakota and Texas.

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