

JCPenney news release

JCPenney Surprises Students with Virtual Shaquille O’Neal Mentoring Session

The JCPenney “Ready for Anything Challenge” Offers Inspiration, Provides \$20,000 in Gift Cards

PLANO, Texas (Sept. 1, 2020) – The JCPenney “Ready for Anything Challenge” promotes back-to-school positivity during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic by partnering with the Shaquille O’Neal Foundation to support students in need.

To kick off the challenge, JCPenney will invite kids and teens from Boys & Girls Clubs in Atlanta, Dallas, Orlando, and Los Angeles to participate in a virtual mentoring session on Sept. 1, during which Shaquille “Shaq” O’Neal will make a special appearance to encourage students, answer questions, and announce a donation of \$20,000 in JCPenney gift cards to the clubs – \$5,000 per group.

The campaign challenges JCPenney associates and customers to take actions to help prepare students in their communities to be ready for anything this school year:

- **Inspire** – Share words of encouragement with a student in your community
- **Listen** – Lend a supportive ear
- **Donate** – Give supplies or gently used clothing to a local school or nonprofit, or make a financial contribution
- **Volunteer** – In-person or virtually within your community
- **Mentor** – Share your story with a student about how you persevered through challenging circumstances

“I’m excited to be part of the JCPenney ‘Ready for Anything Challenge,’” Shaq said. “With what kids are facing this year, I wanted to check in with local Boys & Girls Clubs and share some of my experiences and advice to help them feel confident and supported.”

Through the session, O’Neal will participate in the challenge by taking the fifth action – mentoring students. With his signature humor and optimism, students will undoubtedly be entertained while gaining valuable insights and words of wisdom.

“As JCPenney focuses on closing the opportunity gap, we are delighted to support deserving youth at the Boys & Girls Clubs in Atlanta, Dallas, Orlando, and Los Angeles,” said Jill Soltau, JCPenney chief executive officer. “For young people in need, community assistance is more important than ever, and the vital resources provided by schools and organizations like Boys & Girls Clubs are not currently as accessible due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The JCPenney ‘Ready for Anything Challenge’ will help provide essential support and encouragement for students as they start the school year.”

“We all know this year will look and feel very different with virtual learning at home for some students and mask-wearing and social distancing for those who return to the classroom. They’re navigating new environments and facing many unknowns. We want to do our part to empower and set students up for success so they can do and feel their best,” Soltau continued.

For more information or to support the cause, visit www.jcp.com/readyforanything or follow #ReadyforAnythingJCP on the Company’s social media channels.

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About JCPenney

J. C. Penney Company, Inc. (OTCMKTS: JCPNQ), one of the nation's largest apparel and home retailers, combines an expansive footprint of stores across the United States and Puerto Rico with a powerful eCommerce site, jcp.com, to deliver style and value for all hard-working American families. At every touchpoint, customers will discover stylish merchandise at incredible value from an extensive portfolio of private, exclusive and national brands. Reinforcing this shopping experience is the customer service and warrior spirit of JCPenney associates across the globe, all driving toward the Company's mission to help customers find what they love for less time, money, and effort. For additional information, please visit jcp.com.

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