



Family Giving Tree™

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**Two-Time U.S. silver medalist Polina Edmunds Champions Silicon Valley Non-Profit  
Family Giving Tree**

Edmunds finds Golden Opportunity to Help Children have Tools to Excel in School

**Milpitas, CA** – The Family Giving Tree today announced that two-time U.S. figure skating silver medalist Olympic and World team member Polina Edmunds as their Champion of Hope and Joy. Edmunds will devote time to help Family Giving Tree raise awareness and donations for its Back-To-School Drive, providing school-supply filled backpacks for Bay Area children in-need.

“I’m excited to partner with the Family Giving Tree, and help promote an important cause of providing the necessary tools to help thousands of unprivileged children in the Bay Area succeed in school,” said Polina Edmunds. “Growing up in the area, I had incredible support from my family, and friends to follow my dream. I’d like to pay it forward and help others get a good start in school so they can do whatever they choose in life. I believe education is vital to all kids and by partnering with FGT I am hoping to help raise more awareness and donations for this important cause.” she added.

Edmunds hopes to raise funds to provide nearly 2,000 students with grade-level specific school supplies stuffed in a brand new backpack. Her role will include serving as a spokesperson in public service announcements, attending events and volunteering during the Family Giving Tree’s Back-to-School Drive.

In California, one in four children are living in poverty. Sadly, one of the heftiest prices paid by those living in poverty is the impact it has on their child's educational performance. Arriving on their first day of school with few or no tools to assist them in learning, puts them at a disadvantage on day one. Through its Back-to-School drive, children received a backpack filled with school supplies.

“The Family Giving Tree is extremely excited to have Polina as our Champion of Hope and Joy,” said Family Giving Tree Co-Founder and Executive Director Jennifer Cullenbine. “She is a shining example of inspiring kindness, philanthropy and volunteerism among her fans, peers and all those wanting to make a positive difference in the world.”

### **About Family Giving Tree:**

Headquartered in Milpitas, California, the Family Giving Tree brings hope and joy to those in need through their annual Back-to-School and Holiday Wish Drives. Thanks to the generous support of the community, Family Giving Tree has provided over 1.36 million children and individuals a backpack filled with school supplies or their wished-for-gift during the holidays.

### **About FGT's Back-to-School Drive:**

One out of every four children in the Silicon Valley lives in poverty. Family Giving Tree's Back-to-school Drive aims to close the educational gap for underserved Bay Area K-12 students, by providing backpacks filled with essential, grade-appropriate school supplies. In 2015 alone, Family Giving Tree provided school-supply filled backpacks to more than 36,700 students.

### **About Polina Edmunds:**

Polina Edmunds is a two-time U.S. silver medalist, world team member, an Olympic skater and 2015 Four Continents Competition Gold Medalist. In 2014, Polina was named “San Jose Sports Hall of Fame Female High School Athlete of the Year” by the San Jose Sports Authority. She is an Athlete Ambassador for Right To Play USA and is very active with Kristi Yamaguchi's Always Dream Foundation, which helps promote early childhood literacy in the Bay Area.

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