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## ***SIGNATURE BRANDS ADDS 40 NEW JOBS IN OCALA OPERATIONS***

**OCALA, FL (January 16, 2012)** - Signature Brands announced a work force expansion that will create approximately 40 new jobs at both the Dessert Decorating and Popcorn plants in Ocala. Signature Brands' President & CEO, Jim Schneider said, "With the economy showing signs of strengthening, we will be adding 40 new positions immediately." He went on to say, "hiring is currently taking place, and over the past 12 months, Signature Brands will have created 145 new jobs with the relocation of our Popcorn plant to Ocala. The companies' commitments to The EDC, State of Florida, Marion County and The City of Ocala for their financial incentives were for under 100 positions and I'm pleased we will exceed our commitment by over 50%".

In addition, Signature Brands plans to add another, 90-100 Seasonal, full-time positions when the Popcorn plant moves to 24 hour operations on July 1<sup>st</sup>. These employees will work one of the three shifts daily from July-December. Ideally, these employees will come back every year when we reach our peak popcorn production demands for the holidays.

Signature Brands is owned by The Hero Group of Switzerland and was founded in Ocala in 1951. The company is one of America's leading seasonal dessert decorating and accessory suppliers with products being marketed under the Betty Crocker, Cake Mate, PAAS Easter egg colors, Pumpkin Masters pumpkin carving kits and Popcorn Expressions popcorn brands. The Hero Group was founded in 1886 and does business in 30 countries around the world today. Hero is operated as a family company having over 4,000 employees with Dr. Arend Oetker the majority shareholder.