



UniFirst Announces Financial Results for Fiscal 2001 Fourth Quarter and Full Year, Declares Dividends

October 31, 2001

WILMINGTON, Mass., Oct 31, 2001 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- UniFirst Corporation (NYSE:UNF) today announced revenues and earnings for its fiscal 2001 fourth quarter and full year, which ended August 25, 2001.

Revenues for the fourth quarter of fiscal 2001 were \$138.2 million, a 4.6 percent increase from \$132.2 million in the same period a year ago. Fourth quarter net income was \$5.7 million, or \$0.30 per share, a 15.6 percent increase from last year's \$5.0 million, or \$0.25 per share.

For fiscal 2001, revenues were \$556.4 million, a 5.2 percent increase from \$528.7 million in fiscal 2000. Net income was \$23.2 million, or \$1.20 per share, a 16.9 percent increase from last year's \$19.9 million, or \$1.01 per share.

"Fiscal 2001 was our 33rd consecutive year of record revenues," said Ronald D. Croatti, UniFirst's President and Chief Executive Officer. "Lower merchandise cost was the primary reason for our improved earnings, as we are seeing the benefits of centralizing our distribution functions coupled with better garment utilization in local stockrooms. Other corporate overhead costs were also leveraged, and we had significantly better performance from the locations that had been negatively impacted by last year's integration of the Standard Management acquisition. These improvements were offset somewhat by increases in energy and employee related costs."

The Company will hold a conference call tomorrow at 4:00 PM (EST) to discuss its quarterly and annual financial results, business highlights and outlook. A simultaneous live webcast of the call will be available over the Internet, and replays of the webcast will be available until November 21, 2001. The webcast can be accessed at www.unifirst.com.

The Company's Board of Directors declared regular quarterly cash dividends of \$0.0375 per share (3.75 cents) on the Company's Common Stock and \$0.03 per share (3.0 cents) on the Company's Class B Common Stock. Both dividends are payable on January 3, 2002, to shareholders of record on December 11, 2001.

UniFirst is one of the largest providers of workplace uniforms and protective clothing in North America. The Company employs over 7,500 team partners who serve more than 150,000 customer locations in 45 states, Canada and Europe from 145 manufacturing, distribution and customer service facilities.

The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 provides a safe harbor for certain forward-looking statements. This public announcement may contain forward-looking statements that reflect the Company's current views with respect to future events and financial performance. These forward-looking statements are subject to certain risks and uncertainties. The words "anticipate" and "should," and other expressions that indicate future events and trends identify forward-looking statements. Actual future results may differ materially from those anticipated depending on a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, performance of acquisitions; economic and business changes; fluctuations in the cost of materials, fuel and labor; economic and other developments associated with the on-going war on terrorism; strikes and unemployment levels; demand and price for the Company's products and services; improvement in under performing rental operations; and the outcome of pending and future litigation and environmental matters.

UNIFIRST CORPORATION AND SUBSIDIARIES CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF INCOME (unaudited)

	Fifty-two weeks ended	Fifty-two weeks ended	Thirteen weeks ended	Thirteen weeks ended
(In thousands, except per share data)	August 25, 2001	August 26, 2000	August 25, 2001	August 26, 2000
Revenues	\$556,371	\$528,726	\$138,175	\$132,156
Costs and expenses:				
Operating costs	349,449	336,324	90,074	88,059
Selling and administrative expenses	121,789	118,448	27,151	24,956
Depreciation and amortization	37,568	34,710	9,834	9,058
Income from operations	508,806	489,482	127,059	122,073
Other expense (income):	47,565	39,244	11,116	10,083
Interest expense	9,107	7,459	1,667	2,103
Interest income	(1,239)	(259)	(368)	(25)
Interest rate swap expense	2,240	--	562	--

	10,108	7,200	1,861	2,078
Income before income taxes	37,457	32,044	9,255	8,005
Provision for income taxes	14,233	12,176	3,516	3,041
Net income	\$23,224	\$19,868	\$5,739	\$4,964
Weighted average number of shares outstanding -- basic	19,364	19,670	19,220	19,664
Weighted average number of shares outstanding -- diluted	19,378	19,670	19,243	19,664
Net income per share -- basic & diluted	\$1.20	\$1.01	\$0.30	\$0.25

UNIFIRST CORPORATION AND SUBSIDIARIES
CONDENSED CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS
(unaudited)

(In thousands, except per share data)

	August 25, 2001	August 26, 2000(a)
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Assets

Current assets:

Cash	\$ 5,699	\$ 7,137
Receivables	55,427	54,015
Inventories	22,320	27,598
Rental merchandise in service	56,677	59,256
Prepaid expenses	275	299
Total current assets	140,398	148,305

Property and equipment:

Land, buildings and leasehold improvements	199,084	194,619
Machinery and equipment	224,143	205,883
Motor vehicles	57,620	53,535
	480,847	454,037
Less - accumulated depreciation	215,154	191,704
	265,693	262,333

Other assets

	85,722	89,512
	\$ 491,813	\$ 500,150

Liabilities and Shareholders' Equity

Current liabilities:

Current maturities of long-term obligations	\$ 1,664	\$ 1,903
Notes payable	1,344	1,118
Accounts payable	19,334	19,718
Accrued liabilities	55,685	47,170
Accrued and deferred income taxes	11,928	12,294
Total current liabilities	89,955	82,203

Long-term obligations, net of current maturities

	93,131	124,735
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Deferred income taxes

	23,625	22,040
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Shareholders' equity:

Common stock	1,052	1,050
Class B common stock	1,024	1,026
Treasury stock	(24,755)	(20,049)
Capital surplus	12,438	12,438
Retained earnings	299,313	278,676
Accumulated other comprehensive income	(3,970)	(1,969)
Total shareholders' equity	285,102	271,172

	\$ 491,813	\$ 500,150
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(a) Condensed from audited financial statements

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