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Friends of the Orphans and Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos International Continue to Support Victims of Haiti Earthquake with National Outreach Efforts

CHICAGO—January 19, 2010—Friends of the Orphans, with six regional offices across the U.S., supports a network of Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH, Spanish for “Our Little Brothers and Sisters”) children’s homes and their outreach programs in nine Latin American and Caribbean countries, including Haiti. Since the January 12 earthquake, Friends of the Orphans and NPH continue to support the victims with extensive national outreach and fundraising efforts.

Because of the overwhelming need for cash donations and the swift response from Friends of the Orphans donors, the organization has made available approximately \$172,000 in aid in the past five days. This money is supporting the immediate needs of physicians and nurses treating hundreds of patients daily at St. Damien’s, a 120-bed, free pediatric hospital in Tabarre.

The aid is being used for medical supplies, food, water and supplies critical to effectively treating patients. These supplies are being purchased by NPH Dominican Republic and transported directly into Haiti. Patients are being treated in tents set up outside the hospital, as well as inside the hospital in areas deemed structurally safe. There are currently two functioning operating rooms, and a team of NPH medical workers from around the world are working continually to treat victims.

“Because of generous donors, Friends of the Orphans has been able to immediately get aid where it is most needed: to the thousands of people hurt in the earthquake. The impact of our dedicated team of physicians, nurses and volunteers has been amazing,” said Friends of the Orphans CEO Sharon Saxelby.

“However, because of the widespread destruction, the need for donations continues to be overwhelming, and whatever amount people can donate to ensure as many people as possible are helped is welcome.”

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Friends of the Orphans international volunteer Erin Kloos, who was rescued from the collapsed Fr. Wasson Center on January 13, continues to recover in a south Florida hospital and her condition is improving every day. Doctors expect her to make a full recovery and her family hopes she will return to Phoenix within a few weeks.

Erin is thankful for all that has been done to help her, and she is encouraging people who want to help the relief efforts to make a donation in her brother, who died in Haiti, Ryan's name. Donations can be made to Friends of the Orphans by visiting www.friendsoftheorphans.org or calling 888-201-8880.

The Miami community, in association with the Friends of Orphans regional office there, is rallying around the cause as well. According to Sherman Humphrey, manager of child sponsorship, several initiatives are bringing supplies directly to Haiti. A community donation effort is underway to fill up two, 40-foot freight containers with food, water, and medical supplies, which will be transported via sea to Haiti. Humphrey said the first container will likely ship today and the second at the end of the week.

In addition, the Friends of the Orphans office is partnering with Fed Ex to fly a cargo load of donations there. A Boeing 727 freighter filled with 40,000 pounds of non-perishable food and water departed from Miami International Airport on Sunday.

"Friends of the Orphans is grateful to the entire Miami community for their swift response and donations for shipping. Every bit counts and the cooperation is critical to our efforts," Humphrey said.

In Arizona, where Friends of the Orphans has a regional office in Mesa, residents are volunteering their time and resources to help the victims. Former NPH Haiti *pequeños* Jean Marseille and Miguel Louis, both Phoenix residents and Trauma ICU RNs, flew to the Dominican Republic on Friday and arrived in Haiti on Sunday to volunteer their medical services at St. Damien's Hospital in Tabarre. Marseille and Louis, best friends from childhood, lived at the NPH orphanage in Kenscoff as young adults and later moved to Arizona to study nursing at Yavapai College.

In addition, Jean Marseille's wife, Alicia Marseille, Enrollment Manager at the College of Education at Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, is working directly with the university to raise funds for Friends of the Orphans, which will go to St. Damien's. The university is matching all funds donated by its students, staff and alumni, dollar for dollar, up to \$25,000. To date, more than \$12,000 has been raised.

In Chicago, Friends of the Orphans' headquarters has received a donation of more than \$1 million in medical supplies from Children of Abraham that will be sent through the Dominican Republic to St. Damien's. The office has also received a water purification system that will be vital to relief efforts.

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Because of the widespread destruction and extensive rescue effort throughout the areas impacted, financial aid is great. All donations made to Friends of the Orphans will be directly applied to needs of first responders such as first aid supplies, shipping of necessary materials to assist in efforts, and treating the injured. Friends of the Orphans and NPH will continue to provide updates as they become available.

Please visit www.friendsoftheorphans.org or call 888-201-8880 to make a donation in response to this tragedy.

About Friends of the Orphans

A 40-year-old nonprofit organization with six regional offices in the United States, Friends of the Orphans supports a network of Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH, Spanish for “Our Little Brothers and Sisters”) homes and their outreach programs in nine Latin American and Caribbean countries. Together, Friends of the Orphans and NPH transform the lives of orphaned, abandoned and disadvantaged children by creating families for life through values of unconditional love, shared responsibility and education. This enables children to transcend poverty and grow into caring and productive members of their communities.

Since its founding in 1954, NPH has assisted nearly 16,000 children and currently cares for more than 3,300 in Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru. NPH outreach programs, including the only free pediatric hospital in Haiti, serve more than 30,000 children each year. By making a difference in the lives of the children through volunteer and donation opportunities, our supporters’ lives are enhanced as well. For more information about Friends of the Orphans, please visit www.friendsoftheorphans.org.

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