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For immediate release

“Our Milwaukee 4 Haiti”
Raises Over \$13,700 for Earthquake Victims

Milwaukee, WI. – (February 8, 2010) – On Sunday, Jan. 31, hundreds of Milwaukeeans turned out at Lakefront Brewery for “Our Milwaukee 4 Haiti,” a benefit fundraiser supporting relief and recovery efforts in Haiti.

As of today, the event raised \$13,785.72 to benefit two locally connected organizations, **Friends of Orphans** and **Youthaiti**. Both organizations have established practices in Haiti; working to provide emergency relief at this time, but also invested in the well-being and re-building of the country for the long term. Donations are still coming in.

Gigi Pomerantz, founder of Youthaiti, was thankful for the event and the donation.

“It was incredible to see how many people came out and how many organizations support the people of Haiti. Because of everyone’s generosity, we will be able to help people on the ground purchase and distribute 4500 cases of water,” says Pomerantz.

Friends of Orphans runs St. Damien Hospital, the only free pediatric hospital in Port-Au-Prince as well as two orphanages in the area. The hospital, which normally cares for 120 patients, is currently seeing over 700 men, women and children with additional mobile clinics dispensed to emergency tent camps.

Locals Ron and Ronni Pruhs, volunteers for the organization, have travelled to Haiti countless times over the last 15 years. Pruhs’ attempted to fly into Haiti right after the earthquake but due to several cancelled flights, they were in town and able to attend the event.

“It is really wonderful to see such that such a crowd of people came out to support the Haitian people. We are very grateful to all who help make this happen. With the current demands on our hospital, the people of Milwaukee should know that they have made a difference in the lives of many people in Haiti,” Ron Pruhs says.

The day kicked off with children’s activities including a mosaic project with Sue Pezanoski-Browne of Escuela Fratney, henna tattoo from Anita Reed and a clay project administered by Murray Hill Pottery Works. Throughout the day, music was provided by **Chalice in the Palace** and in the afternoon, **Cecilio Negròn Jr.**, percussionist from De La Buena and Kings Go Forth, performed Haitian style drumming with kids dancing around. The event concluded with a performance from **Dub District Reggae**. Both **Friends of Orphans** and **Youthaiti** also gave

presentations about their inspiring work in Haiti. WTMJ4 sports caster Rod Burks emceed the event.

Complimentary food was provided by local restaurants and items for a silent auction and drawings were donated by more than 50 area businesses. To see a complete list of organizations involved, please visit www.ourmilwaukee.net.

One hundred percent of the proceeds from donations, beer sales, the silent auction and prize drawings will go to the relief efforts of these organizations.

The event was proposed by Russ Klisch, President of Lakefront Brewery and he was very pleased with the event.

“I am happy we have this venue to offer, but it was the hard work of many individuals that made it happen. The ability to pull this event together in just a week and a half shows the strength of the Our Milwaukee network of businesses,” Klisch says.

Our Milwaukee is a business alliance advocating for locally owned, independent businesses to ensure a genuine, quality local experience – in celebration of our community’s unique character. Founded in 2006, Our Milwaukee is a coalition with over 160 member businesses focused on making a more sustainable community and increasing the market share for their businesses.

Friends of Orphans runs St. Damien Hospital, the only free pediatric hospital in Port-Au-Prince as well as two orphanages in the area. The organization, founded in 1987, is Haitian run with the support of international workers and volunteers.

Youthaiti focuses on sustainable infrastructure including composting toilets, organic gardens, hygiene education and reforestation. Their work aims to break the cycle of contamination and improve health and crop productivity. Youthaiti was founded by Gigi Pomerantz, Nurse Practitioner from Milwaukee, after a visit to Haiti in 2006.

Lakefront Brewing Company
www.lakefrontbrewery.com

Youthaiti
www.youthaiti.org

Friends of Orphans
www.friendsoftheorphans.org

St. Damien Hospital
saintdamienhospital.wordpress.com/about/