

NEWS RELEASE

October 12, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

For further information contact:

Anthea Penrose, Public Relations Manager (727) 893-8461

Nancy Waclawek, Director of Corporate Giving, (727) 893-8780

***St. Petersburg Times* matches over \$43,000 Contributed by staffers to Hurricane relief.**

St. Petersburg, FL – Within hours of Hurricane Katrina’s landfall on the Gulf coast and the first reports of the devastation it caused, *St. Petersburg Times*’ staffers wanted to help.

As was the case after the 2004 Florida hurricanes, when *Times* staffers raised over \$25,000 for victims of Hurricanes Charley and Frances, the newspaper quickly established a fund to match employee contributions to the American Red Cross to benefit those affected by Hurricane Katrina and later Hurricane Rita.

By October 1, *Times* staffers and retirees had contributed \$43,213, which was then matched dollar for dollar by the St. Petersburg Times Fund Inc., resulting in a check being sent to the American Red Cross for \$86,426.

“As our hearts went out to the families affected by the hurricanes,” said Nancy Waclawek, Director of Corporate Giving, “We were also touched by the compassion of the people we work with every day. I salute our staff for giving so unselfishly to help all those residents of the Gulf Coast states.”

The *Times* had as many as 15 reporters, editors and photojournalists at one time on the scenes in the devastated communities and evacuation areas in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Texas.

The Pulitzer prize-winning *St. Petersburg Times* is Florida's largest-selling newspaper with a circulation of 327,390 daily and 420,811 Sunday. (ABC Audited 12/26/2004). One of the last independently owned newspapers, the *Times* is owned by the Poynter Institute for Media Studies and employs approximately 2000 staffers, based primarily in the Tampa Bay area.

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