



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Artists for Peace and Justice begins rebuilding street schools in Haiti

APJ remains committed to long term relief

Los Angeles, California. February 1, 2010 – Before the tragic earthquake that set off a catastrophic situation in Haiti, Artists for Peace and Justice (APJ) had already been working on the ground with doctor and community organizer Father Rick Frechette in the slums of Port-au-Prince. The organization was building vital street schools that would provide an education, a warm meal, clean drinking water and hope. Following the devastating earthquake, many of those schools were destroyed.

Paul Haggis, the founder of Artists for Peace and Justice and its passionate advisory board of some of the world's most talented actors and singers, have come back fighting and are **determined to raise sustainable funding to secure a future for the children of Haiti**. The goal is to secure enough funding to re-build and maintain 50 schools. Many generous donors have stepped up with a five year commitment, but there is so much still to do.

“The ‘street schools’ that we support for the children of the slums often provide the only meal they will eat in a day,” says Paul Haggis, APJ founder. “Schools literally save lives in a country where one out of three children die before the age of five.”

Currently, clean-up of the rubble and debris has begun in Cité Soleil with Haitian workers being paid to work alongside the architect and builders to clear away the rubble and prepare for the construction of new disaster-resistant schools. Through its generous donations, APJ has contracted Homes from the Heart (homesfromtheheart.org) as a construction partner and is partnering with Operation

USA (opusa.org) to truck in building supplies as well as ship medical and humanitarian relief from the Dominican Republic.

Donations to APJ have been used directly to buy food and supplies for Saint Damien's Hospital in Port-au-Prince, the only free pediatric hospital in the country, while funds have also been used to rent or purchase heavy equipment to clear away the dangerous debris. The exterior walls of the medical compounds have been reinforced to provide safety to the patients inside.

"APJ is different than a lot of charities. We are incredibly selective about who we work with in Haiti," says Haggis. "We also guarantee that 100 percent of all money raised goes directly to those hospitals, schools, medical facilities and community betterment programs. We're already making a difference and with the support of our generous donors, we will continue to build a better future for these amazing people."

What is Artists for Peace and Justice?

Artists for Peace and Justice (APJ), established in early 2009, is a fundraising effort founded by Paul Haggis and friends that encourages peace and social justice and addresses issues of poverty and enfranchisement in communities around the world. Over the past year, APJ has directed its efforts to raising enough funds to fully sponsor three schools in Haiti in support of the initiatives of Father Rick Frechette and his team. These schools aren't just a place to learn but provide for a hot meal, clean water and a chance at the future to children who desperately need it. Following the devastating earthquake in Haiti, APJ has focused its efforts on raising much needed funds for emergency relief efforts in the ravaged country that is only a few hours from our shores.

For more information on Artists for Peace and Justice please visit www.artistsforpeaceandjustice.com

About Father Rick Frechette

For the past 22 years Father Rick Frechette has worked in the slums of Haiti. He came to the country as a priest and soon saw that what they needed more was a doctor. He began studying for his degree and continued working in the slums of Port-au-Prince on the weekends. The earthquake has devastated many of Father Rick's projects including both of his hospitals an orphanage and numerous street schools. For a country that already suffers so much, these losses are devastating beyond belief.

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