

College Students Work to Create Billion Dollar Project to Raise Disaster Recovery Awareness and Revenue

TAMPA, FL – July 31 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – “Where is the Department of Small, Medium and Large Miracles?” (ISBN: 10:0-9786374-0-2), a book to be released in August by The Last Responders, Inc., is one of the many products being produced by a group of college students; products range from films and commercials to construction projects and educational and social programs.

The Last Responders is a not-for-profit group that was formed by teachers and students to help raise awareness and money for victims of natural disasters – primarily, Hurricane Katrina. Students are from various schools, but most currently attend the International Academy of Design and Technology (IADT) in Tampa, FL.

Ron Clark, a retired teacher from Illinois, and now the Executive Director for The Last Responders, Inc. , arrived in Mississippi on September 4, 2005 and has spent the last eleven months working with The Last Responders on their project to provide assistance to the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

“I came on board to help a few thousand students understand the importance of caring about others,” Ron said. “The ideas and efforts put forth by the group were truly remarkable. Anyone who has spent a week or more aiding in disaster recovery can do nothing but praise these student volunteers. Working in 100-degree weather for the benefit of strangers, and without financial reward, is inspirational.”

The students have decided to donate all proceeds from the sale of the book to people in need across the Gulf area.

The Last Responders believes that, in the future, recovery from natural disasters will only become more expensive.

Student Michael Wempe explains that the goal of the book is to entertain readers while indirectly having them participate in recovery without leaving their home area.

“We started writing in March and filming in July, 2005,” Wempe said. “We are presently courting ten corporations, one billionaire and a few millionaires who care about people to continue with our other projects.”

Kyle Clark, a student in animation at IADT, explains the overall concept of the book and other projects that are underway.

“Gulf residents who tell a light and often humorous side of survival, form

approximately sixty percent of the book's contents," Kyle explained. "The remainder is a series of stories written by volunteers, mostly students expressing their experiences. There is also an explanation by The Last Responders' that reveals how we plan to aid in recovery through books, film, contests, television shows, newspapers and business activity. The book outlines the blueprint for the various activities, contests and events required to generate a Billion Dollar Project."

Readers will learn about struggles and overcoming plight. Stories range from the serious to humorous and include tips on how to take a shower and wash your hair on a gallon of water per day as well as the top ten reasons for not completing your homework.

"Students can do remarkable things when given remarkable things to do. We just need more adults willing to take a moment to guide, inspire and help them to care about the future," Mary Ladner, a first-grade teacher in Pass Christian, MS, and also author of a series of stories in the book, said.

"In a world of negativity, a group of students exist who are using their talents and working as much as 30 hours straight," Ron explained. "They are working as writers, animators, laborers, and web designers with the goal of helping others."

For information on how to support the group; to learn more about their backgrounds and history; or to order and to read excerpts of the book (ISBN: 10: 0-9786374-0-2), visit: www.thelastresponders.org.

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