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\$54,000 + RAISED BY CHARTER SCHOOLS TO BENEFIT HAITI RELIEF EFFORT

Local charter schools raise the bar on fundraising

FLORIDA – January 24, 2010 -- Just days after a devastating earthquake shattered Haiti, students at Somerset Academy Charter Schools in Texas and South Florida began fundraising efforts to aid those affected by the disaster. Other local charter schools in South Florida also launched fundraising initiatives, and secured a \$20,000 donation match from Academica – a charter school service provider. By Monday, January 25th the charter school students, faculty and administrators had raised \$34,942, bringing the total donation to \$54,942.

State Representative Erik Fresen, who will be traveling to Haiti to assist in the relief effort, will present the donation to the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund on behalf of the charter schools.

“Our students are incredibly sensitive to the needs of our community, and the world,” said Bernie Montero, Principal, Somerset Academy in Pembroke Pines. His school, a K-12 campus, alone raised more than \$10,000. Somerset Academy is an affiliated group of public charter schools who share educational principles. Somerset Academy was founded in 1997 and opened in Miramar, Florida with 50 students in grades kindergarten through 5th. Meeting parental demand, it expanded in the following years and now serves students throughout Florida and Texas.

The other charter schools that participated in fundraising efforts include: Ben Gamla Charter School, Hollywood; Ben Gamla South, Plantation; Doral Academy Prep High School, Doral; Doral Academy Charter Elementary, Doral; Mater Gardens Academy, Hialeah; Mater Academy Charter High School, Hialeah; Mater Lakes, Hialeah/Palm Springs North; Somerset Academy Chapel Trail, Pembroke Pines; Palm Bay Community Charter School, Palm Bay, FL; Somerset BASE, San Antonio, Texas; Somerset Academy Dade; Somerset Academy Miramar; Somerset Academy South Miami (SoMi); Somerset City Arts, Homestead; Somerset East Prep, Miramar; Somerset Davie; Somerset Neighborhood, Wilton Manors; Somerset SoHo, South Homestead; and Somerset Silver Palms, Cutler Ridge;

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