

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2005

CONTACT: RUSSELL SCHWEISS
(850) 488-5394

**LT. GOVERNOR JENNINGS UNVEILS RESULTS OF
2005 HURRICANE VOLUNTEER EFFORTS**

~Relief organizations report millions of hours of volunteer service dedicated to 2005 hurricane recovery ~

MIAMI, FL - Lieutenant Governor Toni Jennings today announced the accomplishments of the this year's volunteer hurricane relief work, thanking the thousands of volunteers who generously provided more than 4.7 million hours of service during the 2005 hurricane season. Joined by representatives from voluntary agencies, the Lt. Governor spoke about the importance of volunteers in emergency response and urged Floridians to get trained and prepared for future disasters.

“This year, I witnessed firsthand the extraordinary depth of commitment and steadfast our hurricane volunteers display in times of emergency,” said Lt. Governor Jennings. “Businesses, individuals and community and faith-based organizations continue to work tirelessly with great compassion, in the wake of natural disasters. They are a testament to the good in each of us.”

During the record-breaking 2005 hurricane season, volunteers logged more than 4.7 million hours of service with the total value of voluntary efforts and in-kind donations totaling more than \$105 million. Volunteers and voluntary organizations donated more than \$16.8 million worth of food and more than \$1 million worth of ice and water to assist millions of Floridians recover from the storms.

“For now and the foreseeable future, the need for volunteers and donations after hurricanes strike will be great” said Volunteer Florida CEO Wendy Spencer. “We are grateful to the volunteers and relief organizations who contributed significantly to helping our communities recover from disasters. They are an integral component of Florida’s emergency management plan.”

Recovery from the 2005 hurricane season has not ended and the need for financial contributions is ongoing. During this season of giving, Floridians are encouraged to make a financial donation to the Florida Hurricane Relief Fund at www.flahurricanefund.org <<http://www.flahurricanefund.org>>, or to the relief organization of their choice.

Disaster relief organizations provide ongoing volunteer training, giving Floridians the opportunity to assist in relief efforts after a natural disaster. Trained volunteers help to ensure relief organizations can respond promptly and efficiently to natural disasters. Please contact your favorite disaster relief organization for more information on becoming a trained volunteer.

- Continued -

Every Floridian has a personal responsibility to prepare. By readying your home and family now, in anticipation for the next hurricane season, Floridians can help themselves. For comprehensive information about hurricane planning and preparation and instructions on how to create your own family disaster preparedness plan, please visit the Florida Division of Emergency Management's Web site at www.floridadisaster.org.

The Governor's Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, Volunteer Florida, was established in 1994 by the Florida Legislature to administer grants under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The Commission grants funds to Florida AmeriCorps and National Service programs, encourages volunteerism for everyone from youths to seniors to people with disabilities, promotes volunteerism in emergency management and preparedness, and helps to strengthen and expand Volunteer Centers in Florida.

###