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Bereaved Parent, Sibling Organization Recognizes 95 Compassionate Employers Nationwide

Oakbrook, IL—Ninety five employers, representing 38 states plus Washington D. C., are being recognized by The Compassionate Friends for showing extra sensitivity to bereaved employees following the death of a child. The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is the nation's largest self-help bereavement organization with 600 chapters serving all 50 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico.

Nominated by the persons they have directly helped, these employers are receiving Compassionate Employer Recognition in 2008 for going above and beyond the normal policies of most companies in helping their employees when the death of a child occurred.

Criteria for Compassionate Employer Recognition include, but are not limited to:

1. Allowing additional time off without loss of benefits.
2. Allowing flexible work schedules and assignments.
3. Allowing leeway in job performance standards.
4. Fostering an environment of mutual support among coworkers.
5. Providing professional grief counseling, human resources support, or information regarding self-help bereavement organizations.
6. Other policies and practices that go beyond what is normal in the community.

This is the eighth year for recognition of employers, with recipients jumping from three the first year, to the current 95 for 2008. Employers being recognized range from small companies with as few as four employees to large companies with as many as 10,000.

The 2008 recipients of TCF's Compassionate Employer Recognition are (by state): ARIZONA: Northwest Medical Center, Tucson; Town of Marana/Marana Police Dept., Marana; CALIFORNIA: Experian, Costa Mesa; Hilton Hotels Corporation, Beverly Hills; Mathews Machinery, Inc., Corona; McCune Garden Chapel, Vacaville; Medical Board of California – DCA, Sacramento; Miller Starr Regalia, Walnut Creek; Western Placer Unified School District, Lincoln; COLORADO: Park Forest Care Center, Westminster; CONNECTICUT: Abel Womack, Inc., Wallingford; FLORIDA: Buddy Foster Chevrolet/Dade City Chevrolet, Zephyrhills; Consulate Health Care of Vero Beach, Vero Beach; Gold's Gym, Sarasota; NisAir Air Conditioning, Fort Pierce; Women's Health Specialists, Jensen Beach; GEORGIA: Georgia Baptist Convention, Duluth; Midway Primary School, Silver Creek; HAWAII: Hawaii State Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Honolulu; ILLINOIS: Animal Welfare League, Chicago Ridge; Bon Air, Inc., Moline; INDIANA: Dealer Services Corporation, Carmel; IOWA: Good Samaritan Society, West Union Center, West Union; Magee Construction Company, Cedar Falls; United States Dept. of Agriculture, Ames; Wagoner Family Foot Clinic, Maquoketa; KANSAS: Lane County Hospital, Dighton; MARYLAND: Merrill Lynch, Frederick; MiddleBrook Pharmaceuticals, Germantown; Union Hospital of Cecil County, Elkton;

MASSACHUSETTS: Barnstable Public Schools, Hyannis; Berman Devalerio Pease Tabacco Burt & Pucillo, Boston; MICHIGAN: Ann Arbor Orthopaedic Surgery, PC, Ypsilanti; Pridgeon and Clay, Inc., Grand Rapids; Providence Hospital, Southfield; MINNESOTA: Fisher School District, Fisher; Merrill Communications, St. Paul; Minneapolis Post Office, Minneapolis; Risk Solution Resources, Blaine; U.S. Energy Services, Plymouth; MISSISSIPPI: Fox-Everett, Inc. Jackson, ; MISSOURI: Country Mart, Branson; Northwest Valley Middle School, House Springs; MONTANA: Young Parents' Education Center, Great Falls; NEBRASKA: Henderson Health Care

Services, Henderson; NEW HAMPSHIRE: Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in New Hampshire, Manchester; Bicentennial Elementary School, Nashua; Manchester Memorial High School, Manchester; NEW JERSEY: James D. Butler, PA, Jersey City; St. Barnabas Health Care System Behavioral Health, Newark; United States Federal Probation, Trenton ; NEW YORK: American Red Cross, Adirondack Saratoga Chapter, Glens Falls; Delaware Surgical Group, Williamsville; Kurt S. Adler, Inc., New York; Monroe County Medical Society, Rochester; Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. Tarrytown; NORTH CAROLINA: City of Durham, Durham; Durham County Library, Durham; Newland Communities, Durham; O'Charley's Restaurant, Cary; Piedmont Health Services, Inc., Carrboro; South Piedmont Community College, Polkton; Stabilus, Gastonia; NORTH DAKOTA: Southwest Healthcare Services, Bowman;

OHIO: Gilmour Academy School, Gates Mills; Mt. Carmel Health, Columbus; OKLAHOMA: Southwest Oklahoma Blood Institute, Lawton; U.S. Cellular, Tulsa; OREGON: Tigor Title Insurance Company, Portland; XL Overhead Construction Inc. Medford; PENNSYLVANIA: Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh Respiratory Dept., Pittsburgh; Computer Aid, Inc., Allentown; Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 11 Community Education Services, Lewistown; Whitford Corporation, Elverson; RHODE ISLAND: Jackson Hewitt Tax Service, Greenville; SOUTH CAROLINA: Coastal Fasteners and Supply, Myrtle Beach; SOUTH DAKOTA: Sanford Health, Sioux Falls; TENNESSEE: Quinco Mental Health Center, Selmer; TEXAS: ABC Printing, Longview; All About Kids Child Care and Learning Center, Weatherford; Bell Helicopter, Fort Worth; Citifinancial Auto, Bedford; Gila Corporation dba Municipal Services Bureau, Austin; InterContinental Stephen F. Austin Hotel, Austin; Metrocare Services, Dallas; Zachry Construction Corporation, San Antonio; UTAH: Cedar Ridge Middle School and Cache County School District, Hyde Park; VERMONT: NEOems, Brandon; VIRGINIA: IBM, Fairfax; Sentara Obici Hospital, Suffolk; WASHINGTON: Carry Gear Solutions, Seattle; Kiemle & Hagood Company, Spokane; State of Washington Dept. of Ecology, Olympia; WISCONSIN: Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District; WASHINGTON, D.C.: FINRA.

“So often employees who have experienced the death of a child are expected to return to work in three days, handle the same work load as before, and to leave their grief at home,” says Patricia Loder, Executive Director of The Compassionate Friends. “There is oftentimes a lack of understanding by employers about the realities of grief in the workplace. These 95 employers, large and small, public and private, are being recognized for providing the compassion and understanding that is so vital to the bereavement process.”

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive. To contact The Compassionate Friends, call toll-free 877-969-0010 or visit the TCF national website at www.compassionatefriends.org. Nominations for the 2008 Compassionate Employer Recognition program will be accepted starting Monday, August 4 shortly after The Compassionate Friends 31st National Conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

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