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**THE MR. HOLLAND'S OPUS FOUNDATION AND THE DR. PHIL
FOUNDATION JOIN FORCES TO BRING MUSIC BACK TO A MISSISSIPPI
SCHOOL DEVASTATED BY HURRICANE KATRINA**

Middle School's Music Program Restored with Donation of Instruments

LOS ANGELES, Oct. 25, 2006 – The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation, a national non-profit organization devoted to supporting music education, and the Dr. Phil Foundation have donated more than \$100,000 worth of instruments to St. Martin Middle School in Ocean Springs, MS., making it possible to fully restore the school's music program.

The school, attended by more than 600 sixth and seventh grade students, was completely devastated by Hurricane Katrina. The students are currently taught in several mobile classrooms located on the property of a nearby high school.

"This donation was truly an answer to our prayers," said music teacher Julie Massey. "When we went into our old school after the hurricane, all we could salvage was mouthpieces. Now, thanks to The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation and the Dr. Phil Foundation, we have instruments for those mouthpieces." "This was a very meaningful project for us, and we are grateful to the Dr. Phil Foundation for helping make it possible," said Felice Mancini, executive director of The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation. "We so strongly believe in the power of music to give students a better chance to succeed and be happy in life, and we know we're making a difference. So many people are working so hard to help those affected by Hurricane Katrina and we are continuing to do our part to put instruments back in the hands of children and music back in their schools."

"What we did here was more than just replace instruments," said Dr. Phil. "We helped restore the hopes and dreams of children, letting them and their families know there is someone out there who still cares. Katrina took only a few hours to go through the area, but left a lifetime of destruction."

The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation provides grants in the form of instrument donations to underserved K-12 schools, community and after-school programs as well as individual students who are financially limited and unable to afford an instrument.

Research has shown that the benefits of music education to children include success in society, school, developing intelligence and general success in life. Definitive links have been made between students involved in music education and their academic performances, reasoning skills, work habits and low incidences of substance abuse.

The Dr. Phil Foundation was established in 2003 by Dr. Phil McGraw, best selling author and host of the hit syndicated daytime talk show, **DR. PHIL**. For more information, visit www.drphil.com or www.drphilfoundation.org.

The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation supports music education and its many benefits through the donation and repair of musical instruments to underserved schools, community music programs and individual students nationwide. The organization was inspired by the 1995 motion picture *Mr. Holland's Opus* and was founded by Michael Kamen, who composed the music for that movie and countless others. In the last ten years, new and refurbished instruments with a value of approximately \$5 million have been donated to 763 school and community music programs and soloists across the country. More information can be found at www.mhopus.org.

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