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Montgomery Bar Association

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Mid-Sized Area Firm Making Large Contributions

As area businesses and law firms continue efforts to recover from the recent economic downturn, the Valley Forge based Chartwell Law Offices (Chartwell) has taken the opportunity to step forward and fill an unfortunate, but sizeable void in community outreach and charitable donations.

When Haiti was struck by monumental tragedy on January 12, 2010, Chuck Barreras, one of Chartwell's founding partners, immediately recalled his experiences in the country as an Army Reservist deployed to Haiti during Operations Restore and Maintain Democracy from November 1994 through February 1995. Having served during that time as the Officer in Charge of the U.S. Army's Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center in Haiti, Barreras knew firsthand that Haiti's unstable infrastructure could not handle the severe earthquake which struck and that the damage and losses would be devastating. As such, he immediately circulated a firm-wide call for donations. Within a month, the sixty-one attorney firm had pooled nearly \$6,500 in donations, which were then matched by the firm, leading to donations totaling just under \$13,000.

Reflecting on the donations, which were routed through various groups such as Catholic Relief Services, Save the Children, UUSC/UUS Joint Earthquake Relief Fund and World Vision, Barreras observed that "this is really just a drop in the bucket as far as the level of need in Haiti, but I was proud that our firm, including attorneys and staff, were able to act so quickly and with such generosity, particularly with the economy being what it is."

The recent Haiti donations mark another step in an ongoing charity movement at Chartwell. Since 2007 the firm, under the direction of partner and Navy Reserve JAG Captain Stephen J. Fireoved, has spearheaded a highly successful "Holidays for Heroes" campaign, which is co-sponsored by the

Montgomery Bar Association. Holidays for Heroes is an annual campaign to collect gift cards, international calling cards, food coupons, toys and financial contributions for donation to the USO at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove to ensure that locally deployed troops and their families experience a happy yearend holiday even as they respond to arduous and dangerous assignments around the world. Fireoved, a Navy veteran of 33 years commented, "Everyone at the firm has embraced the program and the response from the troops has been one of overwhelming gratitude." Reflecting on the years of donations for the troops and the recent Haiti effort, Fireoved added, "We might not be the largest firm in the area, but our outreach efforts have really been second to none." These efforts, coupled with a \$25,000 scholarship established for children of injured workers this year and a 2008 community service day and donation drive in partnership with the Variety Club Children's Charity, Chartwell has recently raised an estimated \$75,000.00 in charitable donations.

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About the Montgomery Bar Association

Established in 1885 to professionalize the county's practice of law, the Montgomery Bar Association (MBA) is one of our nation's oldest and most respected bar associations, representing over 2,100 legal professionals in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Now, as then, the MBA exists to uphold legal and ethical standards in our legal community. As the third largest Bar in Pennsylvania, the MBA has a longstanding tradition of service to its membership and the community. For members, the MBA offers an important arena for networking, professional development and education. For the community, the MBA serves as a legal resource offering education, legal assistance and funds and resources for individuals and agencies in need. The Association is actively engaged in public service through community outreach, free educational events offered throughout the year, programs like the Montgomery Child Advocacy Project, the Mock Trial Competitions for high-school students, and more. For more information on the Montgomery Bar Association, visit www.montgomerybar.org.

About the Chartwell Law Offices

The Chartwell Law Offices were established in 2002 by four attorneys and is now among the fastest growing law firms on the east coast. Founded in the ethos of Winston Churchill's "service above self" mentality, the firm strives to maintain a balanced community presence, one that partners Barreras and Fireoved expect to see grow in the coming years. In addition to their primary location in Valley Forge, Chartwell has recently opened offices in Florida and New York.