



THE LAURA BUSH FOUNDATION
FOR AMERICA'S LIBRARIES

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Contact: Kenny Emson
(202) 263-4779

Mrs. Laura Bush Announces Grants to Restore Gulf Coast School Libraries

Austin, TX – Mrs. Laura Bush today announced that The Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries has created *The Gulf Coast School Library Recovery Initiative*, which makes grants available for books for school libraries in the Gulf Coast areas affected by the 2005 hurricanes.

“Schools are at the center of every child's life. The routine of going to school gives children a sense of comfort that is more important than ever for boys and girls who have endured trauma. The sooner children are back in their own school, the happier and healthier they'll be,” said Mrs. Bush.

According to the US Department of Education, 1,121 schools in the Gulf Coast region were damaged or destroyed by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma. The basic initial cost of restoring an elementary school library is upwards of \$50,000 and the cost for a secondary school library is \$100,000 and up. Schools damaged or destroyed by the hurricanes are eligible to apply for the initial round of the competitive grants beginning immediately. Additional funding cycles will occur throughout the year as more funds become available.

The Gulf Coast School Library Recovery Initiative includes the creation of a new fund and a new Task Force. The Task Force will be comprised of individuals from private entities, non-profits and members of The Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries Leadership Council. Under the direction of The Laura Bush Foundation, the Task Force will guide fundraising and operations. The initiative will also seek to collaborate with other partners to restore school libraries destroyed or damaged by the hurricanes.

To apply for a grant and to learn more about eligibility requirements, please visit The Laura Bush Foundation website at www.laurabushfoundation.org.

The Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries, a fund of the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, was established in July 2001 to provide school libraries with new books to expand and improve their collections. The Laura Bush Foundation has distributed 428 grants totaling more than \$2 million to schools in 49 states across the United States.

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