



THE LAURA BUSH FOUNDATION  
FOR AMERICA'S LIBRARIES

## **United States Senate Spouses Raise Over \$15,000 for the Laura Bush Foundation's Gulf Coast School Library Recovery Initiative**

Spouses of United States Senators have raised \$15,752 to support the Laura Bush Foundation's Gulf Coast School Library Recovery Initiative through the donation and auction of dresses donated by former First Ladies, female U.S. Senators and Senate spouses. The donation will fund grants to schools affected by last year's hurricanes to purchase books for the school libraries.

"The Senate Spouses came up with a very clever, very personal, and very touching response," said Mrs. Bush. "These ladies donated 100 of their dresses — evening suits, inaugural gowns, family heirlooms — each with its own story and earned almost \$16,000 for books for Gulf Coast libraries."

The Spouses of the Senate announced the auction at their traditional luncheon honoring the First Lady. One hundred dresses were donated and auctioned on eBay. The item with the highest bid was donated by former First Lady Barbara Bush. The dress, which sold for \$657, is a long white silk Lillie Rubin evening gown and belonged to her granddaughter Marshall Bush. Marshall wore the dress to President George W. Bush's Inaugural Ball in January 2005.

The Gulf Coast School Library Recovery Initiative is a special fund of the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries. The fund was established as a response to Mrs. Bush's desire that schools that were severely damaged by last year's hurricanes have the opportunity to replenish quickly their libraries as the schools become operational. The grant application is available on the LBF website, and the Foundation's Advisory Committee oversees the grant process and awards. Ten schools received awards of \$500,000 in May 2006; another round of awards is anticipated for August 2006.

The Senate Spouse organization was initially organized as the Ladies Red Cross Unit in 1917 to aid the allied cause in the First World War. After the war and during the nearly ninety years of its existence, the organization has turned its attention to a variety of causes and activities, though it still maintains its connection with the Red Cross, sponsoring the regular Senate blood drives.

All schools affected by the 2005 hurricanes in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Alabama and Florida are eligible for awards from the Gulf Coast School Library Recovery Initiative. The application may be found at [www.laurabushfoundation.org](http://www.laurabushfoundation.org).