



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Paul Mitchell Schools Bring Whirlwind of Hope to Tornado Victims

On April 27, 2011, America was devastated by its deadliest tornado day since 1925. Widely televised, the damage in Tuscaloosa captured America's attention, but many other parts of the state were hit almost as hard. Then, with the country still reeling from shock, Missouri and other areas were hit by more devastating storms.

With Paul Mitchell Schools located in Alabama and Missouri, the nationwide network sprang into action to help their students (they call them "future professionals"), staff, and neighbors as quickly as possible.

Their first step was to check on the schools and contact every student and staff member to find out what they needed. "The stories I heard were unimaginable," said Ashley Howard, director of Paul Mitchell The School – Huntsville. "Bodies were found hundreds of miles from where they were, even a car was found in a different city, and many people throughout the state are missing. One of our future professionals was in a car with her baby when a nearby transformer blew as the tornado came. She ran with her baby from the car, and the transformer cables wrapped around her car. After it was over, they found the car and some of the pieces."



Although the schools only experienced water damage and power outages, three future professionals lost their homes, and two staff members lost family in the storm. Jenni Bybee, a staff member at the System – A Paul Mitchell Partner School in Springfield, Missouri, lost her mother, and her grandmother had to be hospitalized after their home was destroyed; both women were thrown about 60 feet into the front yard.



Those who escaped the storm's wrath quickly came together and began helping out. Florida School owners Laura and Giulio Veglio sent their Paul Mitchell bus – a fully loaded, mobile hair salon – to Alabama for a week, and John Paul Mitchell Systems filled it with donated products to use and give away. Students, staff, and local Paul Mitchell stylists eagerly climbed aboard and headed for nearby towns, to lift the spirits of survivors and rescue workers by giving free haircuts and services.



Erin Greggs of Xcell Academy – A Paul Mitchell Partner School, said, “Our week kicked off with two days in Tuscaloosa, where we did over 130 haircuts; handed out products; spread the love of Paul Mitchell to survivors, volunteers, and servicemen and women; and helped the American Red Cross load donation and distribution trucks.” Paul Mitchell students and staff also volunteered at their local Christian Service Mission, sorting, packaging, and shipping donations to the affected areas. “We are giving free blow dries and styles to anyone who needs them, since much of the area is still without power,” Erin said, “and taking teams of students to different areas to aid in the cleanup efforts. During all of this tragedy, I am incredibly grateful to have the support of our Paul Mitchell family and to be able to show that to our students. They are now getting firsthand experience of why we FUNraise as a company and as human beings.”

This was certainly not the first time Paul Mitchell Schools helped out in an emergency, and it won't be the last. When Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005, the network donated \$57,000 to the NCA Disaster Relief Fund, with Paul Mitchell Chairman and CEO John Paul DeJoria donating an additional \$50,000.

Through their annual FUNraising campaign and their nonprofit Andrew Gomez Dream Foundation, Paul Mitchell Schools have donated \$41,000 in the past three years, with \$23,000 remaining in the fund. This year the schools donated another \$15,000, making \$38,000 available for those in need. Since the



tornadoes struck, NCA has used that money to help Paul Mitchell Future Professionals and one non-Paul Mitchell salon owner who lost her husband, her home and her salon in the storm.



Winn Claybaugh, dean and cofounder of Paul Mitchell Schools said, “Because the Andrew Gomez Dream Foundation serves as an umbrella to support causes related to the beauty industry, Paul Mitchell Schools have also donated to CUT IT OUT, Franciscan Haircuts from the Heart, and Habitat for Humanity, building two homes with Vidal Sassoon after the New Orleans floods of 2007. This year, within hours of the tornadoes, we were already in motion to provide immediate relief for those in need.”

More demonstrations of caring and love:

- The owners of the top two schools in the 2011 Paul Mitchell Schools FUNraising campaign donated their prize (a top artist or educator in their schools for a day) to the Alabama schools.
- Paul Mitchell The School – East Bay collected professional black clothing (the network's dress code) and sent it the Alabama schools. As they opened the boxes, Future Professionals discovered a “video love note” with well wishes for Alabama: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lr2oxCrg4wU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lr2oxCrg4wU)
- To raise money and awareness for Alabama, John Paul Mitchell Systems, Paul Mitchell Schools, and NewTek, Inc. quickly teamed up with the American Red Cross to present a live webcast fundraiser at ACME Comedy Hollywood, with proceeds

going to the American Red Cross. Once again, John Paul DeJoria led the way by donating the first \$10,000. Donations are still being accepted at <http://americanredcross.org/webcast>.

- Every celebrity who performed at the ACME comedy show autographed a Dean guitar that's being raffled on eBay for Alabama relief. Visit: <http://bit.ly/jIIVrr>

"After such devastation, it is amazing to see people band together to help," said Paul Mitchell Future Professional Kyla Carter. "It is a great feeling to help others and put smiles on faces by doing what we love!"



### **About Paul Mitchell Schools**

Established 30 years ago, the Paul Mitchell network is nearly 100,000 salons strong and in 81 countries worldwide; every professional hairdresser knows the Paul Mitchell name. Now, with the arrival of Paul Mitchell Schools, we've taken the world of cosmetology education by storm.

At Paul Mitchell Schools, we believe that education is an adventure and the learning experience needs to be fun. Our instructors—we call them "learning leaders"—are trained to draw out the artist in every student and prepare them to compete in the real world. Through our annual "FUNraising" campaign, we've raised and donated millions of dollars in support of many charitable causes. We've built homes with Habitat for Humanity, fed thousands of African orphans, and supported the victims of AIDS, breast cancer, homelessness, abuse, and hundreds of other causes. Visit [www.paulmitchell.edu](http://www.paulmitchell.edu) to learn more.

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