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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONNECTICUT'S INDEPENDENT COLLEGE STUDENTS TO SPEND SPRING BREAK WORKING ON HURRICANE RELIEF EFFORTS

(March 1, 2006) West Hartford, CT- Forgoing sun, sand and surf for hammers, wheelbarrows and shovels, more than 200 students from seven of Connecticut's independent colleges are heading south during spring break to help with hurricane relief efforts. Students will assist with various relief organizations throughout the month of March and will be located from Tallahassee, Fla. to New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward.

Relief activities include:

- **Connecticut College's** chapter of Habitat for Humanity will spend spring break in Phenix, Alabama engaging in Hurricane Katrina relief efforts from March 11 to March 18. With the support of the President's Office as well as club fundraising, 19 students and two staff members will work alongside the Russell, Ala. Habitat affiliate to rebuild houses that were destroyed by the hurricane. Student contact (trip organizer): Elly Dominguez, 207-807-7397, eldom@conncoll.edu.
- **Quinnipiac University's** Student Affairs Department is sponsoring an Alternative Spring Break trip to New Orleans from March 13 to 17. Quinnipiac is sending 12 students and two advisers to work with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. The group will gut homes and prepare them to be refurbished. They will work eight hours a day that week. Contact: Carleen Roy-Butler, assistant director of community service and experiential learning, 203-582-5351.
- A delegation of 26 **Sacred Heart University** students and eight faculty and staff members will spend their spring break in a small Mississippi town that was ravaged by Hurricane Katrina. The group will depart on March 3, and spend the next seven days working to rebuild the three Catholic parish communities in the vicinity of Lakeshore. In addition to several rebuilding projects, three students and a faculty member from the Media Studies and Digital Culture department will produce a documentary that will allow the local community to tell its story directly to audiences in the New England region. Students and faculty members from the Nursing and Psychology departments will be working with a group of

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health care providers from the University of Mississippi to map out a long-range, collaborative response plan focusing on health care, restoration and recovery. While in Mississippi, team leaders will lead nightly sessions during which the students will have the opportunity to reflect on and process the various experiences and situations they met during the day. Sacred Heart University has adopted the three parishes and plans to work with them on a long-term basis as needed. The next relief service trip is planned for May 2006. Contact: Funda Alp, 203-396-8241 or alpf@sacredheart.edu.

- Thirty **Trinity College** students will travel to New Orleans from March 19 to 26 to help rebuild areas affected by Hurricane Katrina with Habitat for Humanity. The students are planning to work on the initial building stages of the Musicians' Village, a project to build 81 homes for displaced New Orleans musicians in the Upper Ninth Ward. In particular, the Trinity students will be assembling construction material in the Habitat warehouse, digging foundations for homes in the Musicians' Village, cleaning up lots which Habitat intends to build on in the future and working in the Habitat Re-Store, a warehouse that sells donated building materials and appliances at a reduced price. Contact: Rama Sudhakar, Rama.Sudhakar@trincoll.edu.
- Nine students from the **University of Bridgeport** will go to Selma, Alabama and New Orleans to work in Hurricane Katrina relief projects during spring break, March 3 to 11. The students will be partnering with the Service for Peace and CHASM (Caring, Helping, Aiding, Supporting and Mentoring) organizations to engage in rebuilding and restoration efforts in communities damaged by Hurricane Katrina. The participants will also be providing educational and cultural programs for elementary school children in the affected areas. A feature of the weeklong program will include presentations on Dr. Martin Luther King and the significant local history and culture of the civil rights movement in Alabama. Students will also be engaged in daily reflection, discussion and journal writing to explore and document their responses to the volunteer work. Contact: John Daley, jdaley@bridgeport.edu.
- Approximately 45 **University of Hartford** students (many of whom are sociology majors) and four faculty members will be heading to New Orleans over spring break, March 18-26. The main task the students will be doing is outreach and canvassing in various parts of the Ninth and Eighth Wards, which will include recording oral histories from the residents there – to document what the city went through and what it will take recapture its past glories. There will probably be three teams of five-to-eight-people to this task. The fourth group will be working explicitly on reconstruction. Some of this will involve gutting houses, but most of it will involve actually working with a small reconstruction team and repairing houses. The students will be part of a team of college students under the auspices of the Association of Humanist Sociology. Also, approximately 50 University of Hartford students – members of the university's Habitat for Humanity chapter – will be going to Tallahassee, Fla. to build homes and other such work for people impacted by Hurricane Wilma. This will be the sixth consecutive year that a busload of University of Hartford students has traveled to the south to work in areas hit by natural disasters. Contact: David Isgur, 860-768-4340.



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- The **Yale University** organization Project Opportunity, affiliated with the national program Opportunity Rocks, is urging students who have not yet signed on to one of the other alternative programs to volunteer for Katrina relief work over spring break. Project Opportunity has arranged for student volunteers to be housed and fed in New Orleans. Two weeks before Spring Break begins, 25 students have already signed up. Contact: Alissa Stollwerk, alissa.stollwerk@yale.edu

For more information on the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges (CCIC) and these efforts, contact Judith Greiman at (860) 236-0900.

Founded in 1932, the Connecticut Conference of Colleges (CCIC) represents 17 accredited nonprofit independent colleges and universities in Connecticut including Albertus Magnus College, Connecticut College, Fairfield University, Goodwin College, Lyme Academy College of Fine Art, Mitchell College, Quinnipiac University, Rensselaer at Hartford, Sacred Heart University, Saint Joseph College, Saint Vincent's College, Trinity College, University of Bridgeport, University of Hartford, University of New Haven, Wesleyan University and Yale University. These institutions are bound by a common commitment to quality instruction and dedicated to collaborative efforts that strengthen the independent sector of higher education in Connecticut. CCIC serves its member institutions through government relations, public policy development, research analysis, communications and coordinated member services.

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