Kids Challenged to Make 100,000 Origami Paper Cranes, Idea Goes Viral & One Million Cranes Arrive.
** Inspires $500,000 in Donations to Rebuild Schools in Japan **

SEATTLE, April 26, 2011—For the past month kids around the world were challenged to create 100,000 Paper Cranes for Japan. Today the hard-working volunteers at Students Rebuild counted the one millionth crane, dramatically exceeding the goal and inspiring a $400,000 donation to rebuild schools from the Bezos Family Foundation and $100,000 from an anonymous donor. The effort, a collaboration between DoSomething.org’s Paper Cranes for Japan campaign and Students Rebuild, was launched in response to the devastating earthquake and resulting tsunami in Japan on March 11th to inspire young people worldwide to support their Japanese peers.

From Armenia to New Zealand, from rural Kansas to urban Philadelphia, from elementary school classrooms to church basements and community cherry blossom festivals, young people came together to fold paper cranes—and mailed them by the boxful. Eight provinces in Canada and every state in the U.S. participated. Children responded worldwide from 36 countries, including students in Haiti, who folded hundreds of cranes for Japan during the groundbreaking of a newly reconstructed school in Port au Prince.

"The students in our school and the community center are very excited to help out, as they understand what it means to be struck by devastation," says Courtney McCurdy, education programs officer at J/P Haitian Relief Organization. "This project is also a great learning tool for the kids in Haiti to teach them that they too, can help those in need."

DoSomething.org and Students Rebuild's Paper Cranes for Japan campaign issued a simple challenge to young people online: make and mail in an origami crane, and each crane received will be matched with $2 to rebuild in Japan by the Bezos Family Foundation. The goal: 100,000 cranes, which would trigger $200,000 from the foundation to fund Architecture for Humanity's Sendai reconstruction efforts in partnership with Japanese designers and builders. The thousands of cranes are planned to live on as a permanent art installation in a youth facility rebuilt by Architecture for Humanity in Japan. After 29 days, when the crane count exceeded 500,000, the Bezos Family Foundation decided to double its gift to reflect and further support the outpouring of generosity from young people across the world to help their peers in Japan and to make a difference.

"Clearly, the support for this project has exceeded our wildest expectations," says Jackie Bezos, president of the Bezos Family Foundation, which founded Students Rebuild. "If there's any doubt that young people want to contribute, here is the overwhelming evidence."

Inspired by the commitment of the Bezos Family Foundation and outpouring of support from children worldwide, an anonymous donor has contributed an additional $100,000. However, the boxes kept coming—another 500,000 cranes worth!

"I know it sounds corny, but it has been emotionally uplifting," says John Moquin, an employee at the downtown Seattle UPS Store who helps field the hundreds of boxes of cranes a day pouring in for Students Rebuild. "I'm a cynic at heart but the response—the response has been unbelievable."
To date, the list of participating countries includes: Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Hong Kong, Ireland, Japan, South Korea, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mexico, Moldova, New Zealand, Nova Scotia, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Scotland, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, the Netherlands, United States, United Kingdom and Venezuela.

"Paper Cranes for Japan perfectly illustrates power of online community to create offline action," says Betsy Fast, editor in chief of DoSomething.org. "It was crucial to give the campaign a virtual home, so that young people worldwide could share their wishes of support and uploaded photos, and, most importantly, see those of their peers. It will live on long after the last crane is mailed in."

Architecture for Humanity has been working on the ground for the past few weeks assessing and identifying projects. In addition to helping families find housing during this transition phase, it is supporting a coalition of local architects and master carpenters to help in the reconstruction effort.

"For the past few years we've seen the impact of youth philanthropists when mixed with the power of social media but this has been incredible to watch," says Cameron Sinclair, co-founder and chief eternal optimist at Architecture for Humanity. "For our team in Sendai, the Students Rebuild initiative has felt like wind beneath their wings as they help communities rebuild. It will be an incredible moment when we place the crane sculpture in the heart of a reopened youth facility."

Students Rebuild hopes to find additional donors to transform this initiative into $1M for 1M cranes.

For more information on Paper Cranes for Japan visit:
Students Rebuild website: http://studentsrebuild.org/japan
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/papercranesforjapan
Twitter: @studentsrebuild #pc4Japan

About the Partners:
Students Rebuild is an initiative of the Bezos Family Foundation that inspires young people to connect, learn and take action on critical global issues. Learn more about Students Rebuild and the Bezos Family Foundation.

DoSomething.org is the largest organization in the U.S. helping young people rock causes they care about. A driving force in creating a culture of volunteerism, DoSomething.org is on track to activate two million young people in 2011. Plug in at www.DoSomething.org. Twitter: @dosomething

Architecture for Humanity is an international NGO that provides architectural and construction services. They are engaged in long-term urban acupuncture, working to rebuild schools, community facilities, and the design and construction of an orphanage and art/music therapy center in Japan. For more information: http://architectureforhumanity.org/

CONTACTS:
Diana Bianchini, Architecture for Humanity, +1-310-288-0077, diana@dimodapr.com
Welling Savo Justin, Students Rebuild & the Bezos Family Foundation, +1-206-450-8868, welling@bezosfamilyfoundation.org