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Guard aids victims of earthquake [The Times Leader, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.]

March 05, 2010

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Mar. 5--A locally based insurance company demonstrated its willingness to give to others by raising nearly \$30,000 to help victims of January's earthquake in Haiti.

As a local corporate donor, Guard Insurance Group gave \$27,678 to the American Red Cross Haiti Relief Fund about two weeks ago to help Haitians recover from the disaster.

The donation was the largest from any Northeastern Pennsylvania company to the nonprofit's Haiti fund, according to Wyoming Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross Executive Director Ed Winters.

"It is a phenomenally good gift. We appreciate it very much. It will really appreciate our efforts for the relief effort in Haiti," Winters said.

Because Guard requested its donation be used for Haiti relief efforts, all the donated funds will be directed to Haiti, he added.

Another \$1,680 raised by Guard Insurance Group employees was donated to other organizations, including St. Paul's Benevolent and Education Missionary Institute, World Vision Episcopal Relief and Development, and Catholic Relief Services as requested by some of the company's staff members.

Guard Insurance Group Chief Executive Officer Sy Foguel knows that it might take up to 10 years to rebuild Haiti to its pre-earthquake conditions, but he said he feels the firm's employees have helped try to ease the suffering.

"I am moved by the generosity of our employees. Even though we are still recovering from a prolonged U.S. recession, we have recognized the terrible struggles of our Haitian neighbors and contributed in much the same way we did after Hurricane Katrina," Foguel said.

Roughly 85 percent of the company's employees working in Wilkes-Barre and 38 others in various field offices also donated in the company-sponsored dress-down days and allowed donations through payroll deductions, Guard spokesperson Bob Thomas said.


As a business insurance specialist, Guard Insurance Group serves 41,000 people in 26 states, plus the District of Columbia.

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