

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 17, 2008



FLORIDA BLOOD SERVICES OFFERS FREE MARROW REGISTRY ENROLLMENT Donate During National Marrow Awareness Month In November

(St. Petersburg, FL: 10/17/08) As the Southwest Florida Outreach Center for the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP), Florida Blood Services (FBS) realizes that for thousands of people with leukemia, lymphoma and other life-threatening diseases, a marrow or peripheral blood stem cell transplant offers a second chance at life. Every day, more than 6,000 patients search the NMDP Registry for a lifesaving donor. Seventy percent of patients will not find a match within their family, and only 3 in 10 patients receive the transplant that could save their lives. Increasing the number of diverse donors on the Registry is critical because patients have the best chance of finding a match within their own race.

In honor of all donors who support the needs of patients requiring transfusions, the FBS Foundation will cover the NMDP registration costs (normally \$52) for all donors that give whole blood, red cells, platelets or plasma during November. In recognition of the urgency to increase the diversity of the Registry, Pat Pedraja, a 13 year old Tampa Bay leukemia patient who was a 2007 CNN Heroes Award winner, started Driving for Donors. Pat and his family have teamed up with FBS to help promote this campaign. Anyone between the ages of 18 and 60, in good health and willing to help any patient in need is eligible to join the NMDP Registry. Simple swabs from inside the mouth to collect DNA samples for tissue typing is all that is required along with registration paperwork.

Prospective NMDP registrants can donate at any FBS bloodmobile or Donor Center to become eligible to join for FREE. Bloodmobile donors will receive a voucher that they can then redeem at any FBS Donor Center where the registration packets will be located. Donors who give at any FBS Donor Center can enroll at the same time.

Generally, healthy people age 16 (with parental permission) or older who weigh at least 110 pounds can donate blood. All Florida Blood Services Donor Centers are open as follows:

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY	DAYS OPEN	HOURS
BRANDON 813-661-4528 727 Lumsden Rd., Ste. A (at Kings Ave. Oak Park Plaza) Brandon, FL 33511	Monday - Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday	8 am - 7 pm 8 am - 5 pm 7 am - 1 pm 8 am - 2 pm
KENNEDY 813-282-3976 4041 West Kennedy Blvd. (West of S. Dale Mabry) Tampa, FL 33609	Monday - Thursday Friday Saturday	8 am - 7 pm 8 am - 5 pm 7 am - 1 pm
NORTHDALE 813-964-1354 15427 N. Dale Mabry Hwy. (N. Bearss/Dibs Ctr.) Tampa, FL 33618	Monday - Thursday Friday Saturday	8 am - 7 pm 8 am - 5 pm 7 am - 1 pm
PLANT CITY 813-752-7638 1902 Jim Redman Pkwy. (Strawberry Plaza) Plant City, FL 33563	Monday - Thursday	8 am - 7 pm
TAMPA NORTH 813-903-2600 5301 East Fletcher Ave. (East of I-275 at 53rd Street) Tampa, FL 33617	Monday - Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday	8 am - 7 pm 8 am - 5 pm 7 am - 1 pm 8 am - 2 pm

MANATEE COUNTY	DAYS OPEN	HOURS
BRADENTON 941-746-7195 216 Manatee Ave. East (at 2nd Street) Bradenton, FL 34208	Monday - Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday	8 am - 7 pm 8 am - 5 pm 7 am - 1 pm 8 am - 2 pm
LAKWOOD RANCH 941-907-0806 8340 Lakewood Ranch Blvd. (North of University Parkway) Suite 105, Medical Office Bldg. Bradenton, FL 34202	Monday - Thursday	8 am - 5 pm
PASCO COUNTY	DAYS OPEN	HOURS
HUDSON 727-819-5433, Ext. 3100 7214 State Road 52 (1/4 mile East of US 19) Hudson, FL 34667	Monday - Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday	8 am - 7 pm 8 am - 5 pm 7 am - 1 pm 8 am - 2 pm
WESLEY CHAPEL 813-929-6500 5319 Village Drive (in Village Market Place, SE corner I-75 & SR 54) Wesley Chapel, FL 33543	Monday - Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday	8 am - 7 pm 8 am - 5 pm 7 am - 1 pm 8 am - 2 pm
PINELLAS COUNTY	DAYS OPEN	HOURS
CLEARWATER 727-582-9500 1680 South Missouri Ave. (South of Belleair, by Office Depot) Clearwater, FL 33756	Monday - Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday	8 am - 7 pm 8 am - 5 pm 7 am - 1 pm 8 am - 2 pm
LARGO 727-548-2583 11401 Belcher Road, (North of Bryan Dairy in Baxter Healthcare) Largo, FL 33773	Monday - Thursday	8 am - 7 pm
ST. PETE 727-568-5433, Ext. 2112 10100 Dr. ML King Jr. St. N. (at Gandy Blvd.) St. Petersburg, FL 33716	Monday - Thursday Friday Saturday	8 am - 7 pm 8 am - 5 pm 7 am - 1 pm
TYRONE 727-384-4145 1700 66th Street N., Ste. 102 (at 18th Ave. N.) St. Petersburg, FL 33710	Monday - Thursday Friday Saturday	8 am - 7 pm 8 am - 5 pm 7 am - 1 pm

Additional mobile blood drive locations and hours can be found by calling 1-800-68-BLOOD (25663) or on the web at www.fbsblood.org

For those unable to donate blood, contributions may be mailed to Florida Blood Services Foundation, 10100 Dr. Martin Luther King Street N, St. Petersburg, FL 33716, or submitted on-line at www.bloodrelief.org

Because tissue types are inherited, patients are more likely to match someone from their own race or ethnicity. Adding more donors from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds to the NMDP Registry increases the likelihood that all patients will find the match they need. Your heritage can make all the difference. If you are from one of the following communities, you are urgently needed as a bone marrow or peripheral stem cell donor: Black and African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, Hispanic and Latino, Multiple race.

**For Information About Pat Pedraja visit www.drivingfordonors.com
For Further Information about the NMDP visit www.marow.org**

FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES CONTACT:

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