

Hello Rotarians,

September 11, 2005

To begin this letter, we would like to introduce ourselves. Our names are Mary Smothers, Sky Bivens, and Stephanie Holcombe, and we are three of the Ambassadorial Scholars here in Melbourne. We are sponsored by different Districts—Stephanie and Mary are hosted by District 9800 and Sky is hosted by District 9810—and we all have one thing in common: we all come from states that have been extremely damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Sky is from Louisiana, Stephanie is from Mississippi, and Mary is from Alabama. Not only are some of our immediate families terribly affected, but literally hundreds of our friends, relatives, and acquaintances were affected, touched, or even hurt by the Hurricane. Therefore, we are asking for your help.

As one of the United States' worst natural disasters, Hurricane Katrina has literally destroyed the areas that we call home. Stephanie and Sky have family, friends and many acquaintances who have lost everything, and Mary's National Guard unit has been dispatched to the scene on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, where they are currently working to clean up. It has been difficult for us to watch from a distance as our friends and family have been displaced and had their lives destroyed. However, this has given us the motivation to offer help where it is needed most.

During our scholarship period, we each seek to fully commit to Rotary's mission and purpose for sending us abroad: to serve as an ambassador of goodwill and as a catalyst of exchange between our host and sponsor Rotary districts. With your support, we would like to link our new Rotary friends here in Australia with those at home, in our districts, clubs, and families by offering financial support for the devastation that has occurred.

Louisiana Rotary District 6840 has sent out a world-wide emergency request for financial support of the disaster. Every Rotary District across the globe has been asked to donate \$5,000 USD to the relief efforts. District 9800 has responded to the call, but we intercepted with a more personal request.

We would like clubs within the District to dedicate the next four weeks to Hurricane Katrina in our honour. We are asking your club to collect money by allocating fine money for the month of October, or any source you deem appropriate, to combine with the District's \$5,000 donation. Once collected, all monies should be sent to the District Treasurer, Bernie Gerlinger, who will then directly send the money to District 6840 in Louisiana.

DG John Wigley is aware of our initiative and is in full support of our efforts. Along with him, we would like this to symbolize District 9800's commitment to fully hosting Ambassadorial Scholars and liaising with our home Districts. Please consider joining in this tremendous effort to help support our family and friends hurt by the disaster in our home states of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

Thank you in Advance!

Yours in Rotary,
Mary Smothers, Sky Bivens & Stephanie Holcombe



L to R: Mary, Sky, and Stephanie

For further information, contact: Stephanie.holcombe@gmail.com or District Governor, John Wigley