



News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contribute Now to Help a HERO: New Nonprofit Welcomes Donations for Public Servants' Survivors

(April 8, 2008) – City employees are diligent and careful. But serving in the trenches can be dangerous. Over the past two decades, 22 city employees have been killed while performing their duty for the citizens of Houston. Now, the Houston Employee Relief Organization (HERO) is here to help those left behind when that tragedy strikes again.

HERO, a nonprofit organization, was created to provide financial and emotional help for the survivors of public municipal servants killed while performing their duties for the city of Houston.

"City employees are all about service to our fellow citizens," Mayor Bill White said. "In that spirit, we created HERO. It's about family helping family in a time of need."

Because HERO is an independent organization supported entirely by donations, it needs your financial help. Contributions to HERO, a 501(c)(3) charity, are tax-deductable.

Their modest pay can make a public servants' untimely death especially difficult for their families financially. HERO has already seen the impact it can make. In December, it presented a \$2,500 check to help defray the funeral expenses for Lisa Norwood, the widow of Public Works & Engineering's Harold Norwood, 44. He died when struck by a car while clearing tree limbs and debris from a Southeast Houston street Dec. 14. HERO volunteers vow to continue their assistance for the Norwood family.

The new organization is patterned after the long-established 100 Club, whose funding assistance is limited to survivors of police officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty.

"We hate it when HERO has to come into play," said PWE employee David Miller, HERO's secretary. "But if it has to, we want to be there to help, and to have the money to help."

All citizens are invited to donate to this cause. Tax-deductible contributions may be sent to:

Houston Employee Relief Organization, Inc.
c/o Houston Municipal Employees Federal Credit Union
608 East Tidwell St.
Houston TX 77022-1820

(end)

Directors: Bob Lawrence (Chairperson), Fred Gebhardt (Vice-Chairperson), Joe Gonzales (Treasurer), David E. Miller (Secretary), Buck Buchanan, Barbara A. Stephens, Candy Aldridge, Rosa Henderson