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Working Wheels Keep Families Working.

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**WHEELS OF SUCCESS INVITES HILLSBOROUGH & PINELLAS EMPLOYERS
TO HELP EMPLOYEES SECURE A RELIABLE CAR**

*Non-profit group helps working families by providing affordable second-hand vehicles;
plans to give 20 vehicles to families on Labor Day Weekend*

TAMPA (Aug. 7) -- Wheels of Success, the Hillsborough County based non-profit group, plans to give away 20 cars on Labor Day Weekend to some of the bay area's hardest working residents.

"This is our first annual Labor Day car giveaway," said Susan Jacobs, Wheels of Success founder. "It's very appropriate that we're doing this on Labor Day weekend, because we're all about helping working families *continue* to work. Without reliable transportation, many low-income people lose their jobs or find it difficult to make ends meet because a disproportionate amount of their earnings goes to repairs and car payments.

Tampa is the highest cost metropolitan city in the country for transportation costs, according to the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR). **Forty percent of the working poor's income is spent on transportation as opposed to 24.6% of the general population's.** The bus system is not only inadequate, running infrequently and with very few routes, but it does not run in the evening or on holidays when many hospitality employees work. Parents working until 5 pm and taking a bus (or busses) to pick up their children from daycare find it almost impossible to get there by the 6 pm deadline.

How to Recommend a Potential Car Recipient

"We usually find the clients we help through recommendations from Metropolitan Ministries and other church organizations; or referrals," said Jacobs. This time, we're asking employers to consider employees who are: low-income; have been working for at least the past 30 days; and have serious car issues. Employers who want to recommend an employee are asked to visit Wheels of Success at: www.wheelsofsuccess.org and fill in the information requested at the green "I Want to Help" link (upper right-hand corner) on the home page. Then, go to "Application for Referral Employer."

'Pay it Forward'

Clients receiving a vehicle "buy" it from the program by making monthly payments based on ability to pay, as well as donating 5 service hours per month to the organization. These payments enable our Clients to make a difference and help *Wheels of Success* to keep rolling and serving others.

(more)

Phone: (813) 417-1090 * info@wheelsofsuccess.org * www.wheelsofsuccess.org

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“We cannot over-emphasize the importance of a reliable car. It helps them arrive at work dependably; get their kids to school; shop for groceries and be active in the community, said Jacobs. When they have something reliable; it’s amazing what kind of improvement it makes that touches all aspects of their life; both at work and at home. And as their life improves, they move to a point where they want to try and help others the same way.”

The recipients of the cars will be announced at the Labor Day Car Giveaway at Sears Automotive, Westshore Plaza on Sept. 4th. The event begins at 10 AM. It is sponsored and made possible by Altrusa International, Tampa Chapter, which contributed a \$10,000 grant and Bill Currie Ford, which assists Wheels of Success with vehicle contributions.

Wheels of Success was incorporated in 2003 to help families obtain or continue work by providing them with reliable transportation through a program of car repairs, vehicle replacement, related licensing services, car payments, down payments and car-care classes in both Hillsborough and Pinellas counties. To date, *Wheels of Success* has assisted 75 families and 48 of them have received vehicles. *Wheels of Success* hopes to assist 50 families next year alone and to expand into Pasco County before the end of 2006.