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Lafitte Foundation Raises $730,000 to Prevent Teen Suicide

COLTS NECK – The Charles Lafitte Foundation (CLF) raised $730,000 during its 10th annual Charity Golf Classic at Due Process Stables here on June 25 for the Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide (SPTS), this year's beneficiary.

SPTS is a non-profit organization, based in Freehold, and founded in 2005 by two fathers, Scott Fritz and Don Quigley, who lost their teenage children to suicide. Its mission is to reduce the number of youth suicides and attempted suicides through public awareness and the introduction of educational training programs for parents, educators and teens across the United States.

Suzanne and Jeffrey Citron, CLF co-founders, matched each donation from the golf outing, dollar for dollar.

Over the past 10 years, CLF's Charity Golf Classic has raised nearly $5 million to improve the lives of countless individuals.

"We are overjoyed at the sheer outpouring of support we have received from both the Charles Lafitte Foundation and its sponsors," said Scott Fritz, SPTS president. "With this tremendous gift, we will be able to significantly expand our outreach across the country with educational training and public awareness programs, and reach thousands of teachers, parents and teens."

Susan McCoy-Tellone, a Manasquan High School nurse who received suicide prevention training from SPTS, added, "SPTS has been there for us through tragedies that have devastated our community. They have spent hours training our staff and community members in suicide prevention. What they will be empowered to do with these funds is immeasurable. It will save many lives."

To date, SPTS has trained more than 40,000 teachers. In 2007, the non-profit worked to have legislation passed in New Jersey requiring all educators to complete at least two hours of instruction in suicide prevention – making it the first state in the country to require such training. Since then, 14 states have passed similar laws.

"This is the largest amount raised at this event in our foundation's history. We are thrilled and humbled by the generosity of our sponsors, and are honored to support the Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide," said Jeffrey Citron, co-founder of CLF. "We know these funds will help them build a lasting foundation and enable them to reach more parents, educators and teens with suicide prevention programming. We are extremely grateful to our golf classic partners, many who have supported this event for a decade, for their support in making this the most successful year."

Each year, CLF selects a different non-profit organization as the beneficiary of its signature event. Since the first event in 2003, CLF has devoted the Golf Classic's proceeds to a single organization that works to improve and enhance communities.