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**For Immediate Release**

**CHARITABLE GIVING AT WEDDINGS  
TAKES HOLD ACROSS THE COUNTRY**

*I Do Foundation Makes Giving Easy During Bustling Bridal Season and Beyond*

(Washington, D.C.) July 18, 2005 -- Every year around this time – the busiest season for weddings – engaged couples scurry to keep up with wedding aisle style, seeking out the season’s newest honeymoon hotspots, hemlines, and hairdos. But one new growing trend is sure to stay in fashion: charitable weddings. Thanks to the I Do Foundation ([www.idofoundation.org](http://www.idofoundation.org)), more than 200,000 couples – many times last year’s number – will celebrate generously in 2005, raising donations for charities of their choice.

The I Do Foundation makes it easy and convenient for engaged couples everywhere to give back to charities close to their hearts. By simply registering as members at [idofoundation.org](http://idofoundation.org), couples can choose from a variety of options to incorporate charity into every step of the wedding planning process.

“It’s not surprising that so many couples are now adding the experience of charitable giving to their weddings. It offers them another way to share what’s personally important to them with their guests,” says Bethany Robertson, executive director of the I Do Foundation, whose website is currently visited by more than 10 percent of engaged couples each year. “Our goal is to make charitable giving an accepted and expected part of *every* wedding.”

According to Robertson, couples are in part embracing the charitable wedding movement because of demographic shifts in marriage. While the trend touches men and women of all ages and means, many couples are tying the knot later in life and living together beforehand, so they’re already adequately stocked with silverware and linens.

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Furthermore, with 2.1 million marriages occurring each year in the US and more than \$125 billion spent annually on weddings, there is a real opportunity to make charitable donations an integral part of wedding culture. Couples registered with the I Do Foundation say they like knowing that some of the money spent of their wedding – more than \$26,000 on average – is going to a good cause, especially at time when they are the recipients of so much generosity.

“Your wedding is one of the best times to give back. It’s a great expression of community, and it’s a time to express your own values to people who love you,” says Noam Unger, whose own July 3 wedding benefited Vermont Youth Conservation Corps.

The first non-profit organization to unite charity and weddings, the ***I Do Foundation*** serves as the leading resource on the many facets of charitable giving through weddings, providing tips, guidance, and free online services designed to meet the needs of every couple. They include: favor programs making it easy for couples to give a charitable donation in their guests’ honor; the ability to request donations in lieu of gifts; gift registries with major retail partners, like Macy’s, Target and Linens N’ Things, in which a percentage of all gift-spending benefits a charity of the couple’s choice, and a dress donation program. In addition, registered couples can shop at I Do Foundation’s partner stores to generate donations through purchases of invitations, honeymoons, rings and more.

## **More About the I Do Foundation**

### *Background*

A non-profit, 501 (c) 3 organization based in Washington, D.C., the I Do Foundation was started in 2002 by a group of non-profit leaders dedicated to developing new avenues of support for charitable giving. I Do partners with non-profit organizations and retail partners across the United States.

### *Retail Partners*

I Do Foundation couples can create gift registries with I Do Foundation’s online retail partners, with up to eight percent of guests’ gift spending donated to a charity of the couple’s choice. Retail partners include Amazon.com; Cooking.com; Gaiam; Home Depot; JCPenny; Linens N’ Things; Macy’s; Mikasa; REI, Sur La Table; Target, and WeddingChannel.com. A percentage of purchases will also benefits charity when couples shop online for rings, accessories and invitations with retailers such as Bluenile.com; CarlsonCraft; einvite.com; ice.com; Nordstrom; Reeds Jewelers, and Ross-Simmons. Travel partners include expedia.com, Sandals, and Carlson Wagonlit.

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*Non-profit Partners*

Couples can nominate a non-profit organization as the recipient of their wedding donations or select from among the I Do Foundation's non-profit partners. The I Do Foundation's partners include Action Against Hunger, Doctors without Borders, Human Rights Watch, the National Center for Family Literacy, Share our Strength and Oxfam America. For a complete list, please visit the I Do Foundation's website: [www.idofoundation.org](http://www.idofoundation.org).

To arrange an interview with the I Do Foundation or to speak with a couple in your area, please call Doug Knight at 202-449-1067.

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