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**For Immediate Release**

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**Dave Matthews Band Makes \$1.5 Million Challenge Grant to Support  
New Orleans Habitat Musicians' Village**

NEW ORLEANS (April 25, 2006) – One of the bands at this year's New Orleans Jazz Festival is doing more than making music—and they are challenging others to help.

Dave Matthews Band announced today that it has issued a \$1.5 million challenge grant to help build the New Orleans Habitat Musicians' Village. The Village is a Habitat for Humanity project that seeks to build more than 300 homes in the city's Upper Ninth Ward with musicians and other New Orleanians who were displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

The New Orleans Habitat Musicians' Village was conceived by Branford Marsalis and Harry Connick Jr., honorary chairs of Habitat for Humanity's hurricane rebuilding program Operation Home Delivery. The Village will consist of Habitat-constructed homes and will feature the Ellis Marsalis Center for Music, named for the patriarch of the Marsalis clan, modern jazz pioneer and native New Orleanian.

"After the hurricane first struck, we were shocked by the destruction, and we knew we wanted to help," said Dave Matthews Band. "We organized a concert with the Neville Brothers and the John Butler Trio shortly after the storm. The generosity of our fans and everyone involved exceeded our expectations."

That concert in Denver raised \$1.5 million and is the source of funding for the challenge grant. "We want to thank the Denver community for making this grant possible," said Dave Matthews Band. "Many people donated their time and resources to keep costs to a minimum so we could maximize the donation.

"The recovery in New Orleans is moving very slowly," said the band. "This is our way to get the word out that there is more work to do, and ask people to step up to the challenge and make a donation to help." Contributions to the New Orleans Habitat Musicians' Village will be matched dollar for dollar through the grant, raising the total donation potential to \$3 million. Donations can be made online by visiting [www.habitat-nola.org](http://www.habitat-nola.org) and clicking on Musicians' Village.



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“The entertainment industry and other corporate partners have been phenomenally supportive of the New Orleans Habitat Musicians’ Village,” said Jim Pate, executive director of New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity and coordinator of Habitat’s rebuilding efforts in the Crescent City. “This challenge grant from Dave Matthews Band will focus attention on these positive rebuilding efforts while letting everyone know there is still a lot of work to do.”

“We are extremely grateful to Dave Matthews Band and the wonderful citizens of Denver for stepping up to the plate,” said Branford Marsalis. “The New Orleans Habitat Musicians’ Village is the first step in helping to replace what the city has lost. This contribution, and the others it will generate, will help ensure that New Orleans music will always have a home. That’s important to me. It’s important to my family. And it’s a key to the recovery of the city.”

“Dave Matthews Band represents the kind of leadership it will take to bring back New Orleans,” said Harry Connick Jr. “Music is the essence of New Orleans and we adamantly refuse to surrender it to the wind and water. And now fellow musicians like Dave Matthews Band and others are helping us make sure that doesn’t happen.”

“New Orleans and its music were meant to be,” said Chris Clarke, senior vice president of Habitat for Humanity International. “We couldn’t ask for a better symbol of hope than the houses that are beginning to come out of the ground in the New Orleans Habitat Musicians’ Village. The hard work of Branford Marsalis, Harry Connick Jr., and the New Orleans affiliate has made it possible for others, like Dave Matthews Band, to support the project. On behalf of Habitat for Humanity International, we thank Dave Matthews Band for this most generous and sustaining contribution.”

As Habitat works to raise additional money, it also will be working with the music community to identify local musicians who are willing to partner with Habitat to help build their homes and to pay a no-profit mortgage. “This is Habitat’s traditional partner family model,” said Pate, “but it is focused on helping musicians of modest resources who were affected by the hurricanes.”

To support the New Orleans Habitat Musicians’ Village, please visit: [www.habitat-nola.org](http://www.habitat-nola.org) and click on Musicians’ Village, or mail a check to: NOAHH – Musicians’ Village; P.O. Box 15052, New Orleans, LA 70175-5052.

### ***About Dave Matthews Band***

*Dave Matthews Band is one of the most successful rock bands in North America. During the past 14 years, the band has sold over 32 million CDs and DVDs, and more than 12 million tickets on tour. The Band created the Bama Works Fund, established in 1999, and through it has donated millions of dollars in grants to a variety of organizations in their hometown of Charlottesville, Virginia and around the world. Beneficiaries have included public school systems, children's hospitals, community parks, youth community clubs, AIDS organizations, environmental organizations and tsunami relief.*



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***About New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity***

*New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity, founded in 1983, is an autonomous Louisiana non-profit corporation that serves the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. John the Baptist. In its 22-year history, NOAHH has built over 100 Habitat homes. For more information, visit [www.habitat-nola.org](http://www.habitat-nola.org).*

***About Habitat for Humanity International***

*Habitat for Humanity International is an ecumenical Christian ministry that welcomes to its work all people dedicated to the cause of eliminating poverty housing. Since its founding in Americus, Ga., in 1976, Habitat has built more than 200,000 houses in nearly 100 countries, providing simple, decent and affordable shelter for more than one million people. For more information, visit [www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org).*