



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 6, 2011

Friends Unite to Use Solar Energy to Advance Education in Rural India

Raleigh, NC – Friends Unite, a Raleigh based non-profit focused on providing the support necessary for people and communities to help themselves, has partnered with Brahmi, a humanitarian organization, to install solar panels at the Anjana Vidyakendra School in Guttahali Village, India.

Just recently, Friends Unite was selected by the GlobalGiving Foundation to participate in its **Open Challenge**, a fundraising opportunity for nonprofit organizations working around the world.

In order to succeed in GlobalGiving's Open Challenge, Friends Unite must raise \$4,000 from 50 donors by April 30, 2011. This project will use solar panels to provide reliable energy to school children in rural India. If they meet this threshold, they will be given a permanent spot on GlobalGiving's website, where they will have the potential to build relationships, gain exposure and access dozens of online fundraising tools.

The solar panels will provide a more reliable source of electricity to the school. Currently, Anjana Vidyakendra suffers from severe electricity shortages, often on the power grid for only three to four hours each day. Even when electricity exists it is very unreliable. The solar panels will also enhance educational opportunities by allowing the creation of a planned computer lab. Solar energy is an effective method to bring the benefits of modern technology to the school and community.

Brahmi, under the direction of Dr. Channa Raju, founded the Anjana Vidyakendra School in 2001. The school provides education to rural children who would otherwise lack access to educational opportunities. Brahmi is dedicated to primary education and the spread of literacy in rural India. With such inconsistent access to power, students at Anjana Vidyakendra did not have the light required to study properly, and the school's goal of creating a computer lab was not feasible.

“My parents came to the United States originally from India and have helped many relatives also emigrate over the years. While I thought I understood what it meant to be under-resourced, I only truly obtained a perspective when I actually traveled to India over the years. Despite the rural nature of this school, they have leadership with a vision to enable these children to far exceed expectations with some assistance from others. I see this not only as an opportunity to raise these children a step or two, but also to become a model for other organizations to follow in educating their own children,” said Ketan Soni, Board Member, Friends Unite.

The solar project at Anjana Vidyakendra will provide a more consistent and effective educational environment. The solar panels provide a self-sustaining method of securing power versus being reliant upon an uncontrollable electrical grid.

ABOUT FRIENDS UNITE: Friends Unite is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Raleigh Immigration Attorney, Murali Bashyam, formed the nonprofit organization with the charitable mission of providing the support necessary for people and communities to help themselves. Friends Unite provides support for the advancement of education, health services and other basic necessities, such as food, water and shelter.

To learn more about Friends Unite, their mission, goals, projects & partners and how to help visit: www.friendsunite.org

Media Contact:

Jessica Coscia

919-833-0840

jessica@bashyamspiro.com

###