



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**PLATELET DONORS SAVE LIVES OF THOSE INJURED IN THE TORNADOS
IN TENNESSEE**

St. Petersburg, FL (2/6/08) Florida Blood Services (FBS) staff and volunteer blood and platelet donors were shocked to hear of the horrific tornados that touched down in Memphis, Tennessee. We join with the nation in grieving for the victims and their families, and are thankful we could share platelets with the West Tennessee Regional Blood Center. Platelets are essential for blood clotting and are frequently needed by trauma patients. Platelets must be transfused within five days of donation, so the supply requires constant replenishment. Donors can give platelets in any of our 13 donor center's every two weeks.

"FBS is a member of the America's Blood Center's National Blood Exchange and we have been asked to provide a fellow blood center in Memphis with lifesaving platelets," said J.B. Gaskins, FBS Vice President. "This is another good reminder of why we need our shelves continually replenished with life-saving blood components so we can be prepared for such catastrophic events or natural disasters. The Tampa Bay area just went through a tragedy with the I-4 multi-car pileup and area blood donors were very quick to respond. We thank every blood donor who helps save lives everyday," said Gaskins.

Generally, healthy people at least 16 years of age (with parental permission) or older who weigh at least 110 pounds can be blood donors. **Prospective donors may call 1-800-68-BLOOD (25663) or click on www.fbsblood.org for information regarding all donation locations.**

Florida Blood Services provides for the blood needs of patients at 38 hospitals in Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, and Pinellas counties, through the participation of volunteer blood donors. Over 750 donations are required daily due to the high quality of medical care in Tampa Bay that serves the most critically ill patients throughout west central Florida.

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