

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **New Relief Kitchen and Community Center Opens in Plaquemines Parish**

BURAS, LA—April 15—Emergency Communities, the non-profit relief effort that operates the Made with Love Café and Grill in St. Bernard Parish, announces the opening of a similar free kitchen and community center in Buras, Louisiana. Hurricane Katrina first made landfall in Buras, and between Katrina and Rita, Plaquemines Parish suffered twenty-seven levee breaks and a total of 6.5 million gallons of spilled oil. Buras, Port Sulfur, Pointe a la Hache, and other towns of southern Plaquemines were destroyed. Emergency Communities will help residents lead the relief effort by offering hot, nutritious meals, and a safe, positive space to gather and discuss the challenges of rebuilding. The kitchen will operate from May 1 through August 20.

The United Way and members of the Plaquemines Parish government invited Emergency Communities to open a kitchen in Buras after watching the success of the Made with Love Café and Grill. Since opening on December 12 in Arabi, LA, the Made with Love Café and Grill has served about 1500 hot meals per day. Made with Love offers musical entertainment, first aid, massage, distribution of clothing and ice, haircuts, free internet and long distance, and has recently begun offering bingo and movie nights aimed at the senior population. St. Bernard Parish is getting back on its feet, and the logistical, emotional, and nutritional support provided by Made with Love has contributed to that. The Made with Love Café and Grill has stopped serving contractors to help support the local economy, and the entire kitchen will shut down in June.

The new kitchen will be on the site of a wrecked YMCA in Buras. Emergency Communities expects to serve as many as 1,000 meals a day to returning residents and residents who travel down for the day to work on their homes. “Buras was the first place on the Gulf Coast hit by Katrina, and in some ways it’s the last place to get relief,” says Executive Director Mark Weiner. “Some Plaquemines residents drive two hours just to buy groceries. We want to alleviate that burden so residents can focus on the challenge of rebuilding their homes, lives, and communities.”

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