



**United Way
of the Greater Seacoast**

For Immediate Release

May 16, 2005

Contact:

Cheryl Rau, Director of Marketing & Communications
603-436-5554 x 21, crau@uwgs.org

Highland Hardwoods Raises Awareness and \$50,000 for United Way of the Greater Seacoast

Portsmouth, NH – It’s a challenge that any small business or nonprofit organization with a limited (or nonexistent) marketing budget knows well – how do we break through the information overload and advertising clutter and let people know about us?

“I was embarrassed to admit that, like a lot of people, I didn’t really know very much about what United Way of the Greater Seacoast actually did,” Rick Lang, Owner of Highland Hardwoods noted. “After I became aware of the various ways they helped those in need, right here in our own community, I knew that one thing our company could do is help them get that message out.”

Recently, Rick and Wendy Lang, Owners of Highland Hardwoods of Brentwood, NH, presented a check for \$50,000 to United Way of the Greater Seacoast. The donation represents 10% of all retail wood flooring sales for the company during January and February of 2005. But according to Lang, the focus wasn’t primarily on the dollar goal.

During the two-month campaign, Lang also produced a 30-second television spot that promoted both the United Way and Highland Hardwoods’ special fundraising campaign. The TV spot aired over 300 times on each of four major area TV networks, with approximately two thirds of the airtime donated at no cost.

- more -

“What was perhaps the most rewarding part for me was finding a new and effective way to educate people about the United Way,” Lang explained. “I really enjoyed the challenge of creating a PSA that would help this agency get the word out and reach more people.”

The Langs credit Anne Holliday, CPA, their accountant and United Way Board member, with inspiring them to become more philanthropic and to “think local” in looking for causes and organizations to support in the community.

“The result was far greater than any of us could have ever expected,” Lang added. “We’re a small company with 26 employees. But small companies can do big things. This is a good example of what can be accomplished when a group of people work together towards a collective goal, with shared vision, to support a worthy cause.”

“The promotional effort by Highland Hardwoods exceeded everyone’s expectations, both financially and in terms of the valuable TV exposure that helped raised public awareness of the United Way mission,” said Tim Allison, Senior Director of Resource Development for United Way of the Greater Seacoast. “We are very grateful to Rick and all the employees of Highland Hardwoods. Their commitment to our community sets an impressive example we hope others will follow.”

“Ten years ago, the poor economy left us so weak financially that we wouldn’t have been able to give \$10 to United Way. But we’ve come a long way since then,” Lang added.

“This effort shows what even a small company can accomplish if you dream big and set your sights high. It really feels good to be able to give something back to the community in which we live and work. Everybody at our company feels very proud of what we have accomplished together.”

3 - United Way of the Greater Seacoast - May 16, 2005
Highland Hardwoods Raises Awareness

United Way of the Greater Seacoast is a local nonprofit organization whose mission is to rally resources to address the community's most pressing needs. Through collaboration, outreach and funding support for over 100 health and human service programs, the United Way of the Greater Seacoast seeks to deliver positive community impact in three key areas: promoting self-sufficient individuals and families, improving health and wellness, and supporting strong and safe communities.

United Way of the Greater Seacoast serves 45 communities in Strafford and Rockingham Counties, as well as Kittery and Eliot, Maine, and runs a Volunteer Action Center with more than 450 volunteer help-wanted listings with hundreds of local nonprofit agencies. For more information, visit www.uwgs.org.

###



Photo caption:

Highland Hardwoods presents a check for \$50,000 to United Way of the Greater Seacoast. From left: Joe MacAdams, General Manager and Wendy and Rick Lang, Owners of Highland Hardwoods; Tim Allison, Senior Director of Resource Development, United Way of the Greater Seacoast; and Anne Holliday, CPA and United Way Board Member.