

**For Immediate Release**

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## **DMANF RECOGNIZES OPERATION SMILE AS 2008 NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR**

**New York City, August 13, 2008** — The Direct Marketing Association's Nonprofit Federation (DMANF) today announced that Operation Smile is the winner of its 2008 Nonprofit Organization of the Year Award, which annually recognizes an outstanding achievement by a nonprofit organization using direct-response marketing to advance its mission. The award will be presented on Friday, August 15 at a luncheon that will conclude the DMANF's New York Nonprofit Conference, which will be held August 14-15 at the world-famous Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in Manhattan.

Commenting on this year's award, Brian Cowart, chair of DMANF's Awards Committee and senior director of mail acquisition and donor retention at ALSAC/St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, said, "Operation Smile exemplifies excellence both in its mission and fundraising programs. While its direct marketing innovations and strategies are forging new paths in fundraising, more importantly, they're garnering an increasing level of support and awareness for their wonderful work. As this year's award recipient, we recognize and honor Operation Smile's contributions as an industry leader and for the fundraising success that is helping to positively impact the lives of thousands of children all over the world."

Operation Smile is a worldwide children's medical charity that provides free surgery to children in developing countries who were born with facial deformities. Founded in 1982 by Dr. William P. Magee Jr., a plastic surgeon, and his wife, Kathleen S. Magee, a nurse and clinical social worker, the organization is dedicated to providing free surgery to children suffering from facial deformities, while fostering sustainability and capacity building in each developing country where they work.

"We believe that every child deserves to live their life with dignity, and for those suffering with cleft or other facial deformities, dignity begins with a smile," said CEO and Co-founder Dr. Magee. "Operation Smile has been able to mobilize a world of compassion to change children's lives."

To date, thousands of medical professionals from around the world have volunteered their time and skills to perform free cleft lip and cleft palate surgeries for more than 120,000 children and young adults. Operation Smile currently has programs in 51 countries worldwide.

In its decision to recognize Operation Smile with the organization's top honor, the DMANF Awards Committee examined the following accomplishments:

- Operation Smile's Direct Response TV (DRTV) success has enabled rapid growth of the organization's donor database. From 2002, Operation Smile has experienced file growth of over 1,000 percent.

- In celebration of 25 years, Operation Smile launched a multi-faceted series of initiatives culminating with the World Journey of Smiles in November 2007, where over 4,000 children received free cleft lip or cleft palate surgery conducted through 40 simultaneous medical missions in 25 countries during a 10-day period. A highly targeted World Journey of Smiles direct-response campaign, using all media channels with a targeted and consistent message, increased awareness and media attention, raising funds to support the campaign and beyond.
- Several months prior to the World Journey of Smiles event, Operation Smile began sending targeted appeals to donors, including some that allowed donors to send a personal message and gift to a child receiving a new smile on the World Journey of Smiles. This innovative campaign that employed direct response yielded such overwhelming awareness, response, and a desire for donor involvement that it has become a model for upcoming campaigns. Moreover, the programmatic achievement made possible by this fundraising effort has empowered the organization to make expanded future growth plans.
- Direct-response revenue has increased 600 percent since 2004, allowing Operation Smile to invest in its long-term goals, programs, and initiatives. Additionally, it has provided a sustainable long-term revenue stream that is ultimately changing the lives of thousands more children in need.

“It is an honor to recognize Operation Smile with this prestigious award,” said Senny Boone, executive director of the DMANF. “Due to its successful fundraising and inspiring mission, Operation Smile has been a beacon to fellow organizations over the years. We are delighted to be able to celebrate their inspirational work and applaud them publicly.”

Commenting on the award, Kyla Shawyer, senior vice president of response marketing and development for Operation Smile, said, “We appreciate this honor and privilege to represent our peers and the nonprofit industry. And we thank our committed and generous donors and volunteers, as well as our fellow nonprofit organizations, for helping make this possible. We’re grateful that we’ve been able to implement an integrated strategy in which all media channels come together not just to raise money or to build a brand, but to help change the face of our world.”

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#### **About the Nonprofit Federation of the DMA**

The Nonprofit Federation of the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) is the leading association for nonprofit organizations that use direct marketing channels such as mail, Internet, email, telephone, and social networking to gain support from individual donors. For more than 25 years, the Nonprofit Federation (and its predecessor organizations) has served as an effective advocate for nonprofits both in Washington, DC and in all 50 states regarding postal rates and delivery service, data protection, fundraising accountability, and other legislative and regulatory issues that affect nonprofit fundraising. It also leads the way in professional education, market intelligence, and networking for its more than 400 member organizations. In 2007, Americans gave \$229 billion to nonprofit organizations; the majority of those donations were the result of direct marketing. For additional information on the Nonprofit Federation, its work, and its member benefits, visit [www.nonprofitfederation.org](http://www.nonprofitfederation.org).

#### **About Operation Smile**

Founded in 1982, Operation Smile ([www.operationssmile.org](http://www.operationssmile.org)), headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia, is a worldwide children’s medical charity whose network of global volunteers are dedicated to helping improve

the health and lives of children and young adults. Since its founding, Operation Smile volunteers have treated more than 120,000 children born with cleft lips, cleft palates, and other facial deformities and currently work in 51 countries. In addition to contributing free medical treatment, Operation Smile trains local medical professionals in its partner countries and leaves behind crucial equipment to lay the groundwork for long-term self-sufficiency.