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True Love Waits Receives Funding to Expand Work in Africa

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (April 12, 2007)—True Love Waits International has received \$950,000 through LifeWay Christian Resources' *A Defining Moment* campaign to begin the first phase of expanding its abstinence-until-marriage message in six African countries, LifeWay President and CEO Dr. Thom Rainer announced today.

“Although HIV/AIDS is a concern worldwide, the most concentrated and high-risk area continues to be the continent of Africa, where the life expectancy in some countries has dropped from age 42 to as low as age 30,” Rainer said. “We are very pleased to make this announcement today because we believe True Love Waits can be the answer for the AIDS epidemic on the entire continent.”

“Through the gifts of generous donors to *A Defining Moment*, we now are able to expand True Love Waits in a continent where AIDS is literally a life-and-death battle,” added Mike Arrington, a spokesman for the campaign. “God has given us a program that not only is very effective but also can easily be multiplied.”

Since its introduction in Uganda 13 years ago, True Love Waits has been a catalyst for bringing people together to address the AIDS problem and spread the message of biblical purity to schools, youth groups, communities and other places. In the years that followed, Uganda's HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (the percentage of people living with HIV/AIDS) – which in some areas was above 30 percent – dropped to about 6 percent of the country's 25 million people.

“Some leaders in Uganda say that this turnaround has literally saved a generation. We believe that expanding True Love Waits to other parts of Africa has the potential of dramatically lowering the HIV/AIDS infection rate in those countries as well,” said Jimmy Hester, co-founder of True Love Waits.

Larry and Sharon Pumpelly, the missionaries that introduced True Love Waits in Uganda in 1994, are working with Hester and the LifeWay True Love Waits Team on the multi-country expansion.

Through the efforts of leaders in communities touched by the problem of sexual activity among the youth population, Hester noted that True Love Waits can fight AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases; unplanned pregnancies; and a number of emotional, social,

psychological and spiritual problems by helping young people change their attitudes and behavior related to sexual expression.

Based on methodologies developed in Uganda, True Love Waits will establish an ongoing relationship with a key national champion in each African country who, in turn, will build a hierarchy of teams within the country. These teams will utilize a proven verbally based, culturally appropriate teaching approach to carry the message of True Love Waits.

“This is an intentional effort to learn from the experiences in Uganda and apply those principles to other African countries, taking into account cultural differences that exist between these countries,” Hester said.

A Defining Moment is a new philanthropic campaign initiated by LifeWay Christian Resources to touch the nations for Jesus Christ.

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