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### **Launch of New Corporation Benefits Local Nonprofits and Across the Globe**

CHICAGO, IL – October 12, 2006—A new Chicago-based company has joined forces with local nonprofits to raise funds for peace-promoting efforts while supporting artisans in developing regions of the world. After seeing first-hand the need for education and economic improvement in developing regions, two young women started brainstorming. Their solution? The Mora and Mahogany Corporation: a for-profit company that sells fair trade handicrafts at local nonprofit fundraising events.

The company has planned its official launch party for this Sunday. Founders CEO Jasmine Schmidt and president Cheryl Middaugh are using this party as an opportunity to raise funds for six local peace-promoting organizations. The “Party 4 Peace” will showcase Mora and Mahogany’s product line of fair trade handicrafts, and 50% of all sales made during the evening will be donated to the partnering organizations: The Brother David Darst Center for Peace & Justice, Spirituality & Education; City Year Chicago; Chicago Fair Trade of Oxfam America; The Department of Peace Campaign – Illinois; The Initiative for the Defeat of Stigma; and Mrakulous Media Arts Group/ Journey to Peace.

The Party 4 Peace is taking place on Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Mora and Mahogany has private access to Mix Bar for this event, an eclectic locale known for their global cuisine, located at 2843 N. Halsted in Chicago. The event is free to the public, with the intention of raising funds through the sales of Mora and Mahogany’s products. “Our choice to focus on supporting organizations promoting peace isn’t about a personal political agenda. In fact, it’s about something much bigger: creating a world where children value diversity; taking the time to learn who our neighbors really are instead of passing judgment; and every person feeling that their life is worth something in this world. Creating a more peaceful world where everyone benefits is really what the entire concept of Mora and Mahogany is all about,” says co-founder Schmidt.

After working for several years in the nonprofit sector, Middaugh and Schmidt decided to create a business model that validates and empowers all parties involved. Embracing the principles of fair trade, a philosophy that cultivates partnerships between buyer and seller to create sustainable and equitable economic opportunities, Mora and Mahogany imports handmade items such as wood carvings, beaded jewelry and clothing. By keeping overhead costs at a minimum, Middaugh and Schmidt are able to compensate artisans fairly and maintain reasonable product prices. Rather than having a costly storefront, the company sells at local fundraising events and donates a percentage of sales to the hosting organizations.

For more information on Mora and Mahogany, visit [www.moramahogany.com](http://www.moramahogany.com)

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