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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**GASES AND WELDING DISTRIBUTORS ASSOCIATION TO BREAK  
\$1 MILLION MARK IN CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS**

**MIAMI, FLA., August 23, 2011** – The Gases and Welding Distributors Association (GAWDA) is about to break the \$1 million mark in charitable contributions through its GAWDA Gives Back campaign as it gears up to help worthy causes in New York City.

Over the past 12 years, GAWDA Gives Back has donated \$975,053 to help charities in the host cities of their annual convention. This year, New York City will host the convention and GAWDA has selected the FDNY Fire Family Transport Foundation and the Pencil Fellows Program as the recipients of their members' monetary contributions.

"Our GAWDA members generously give to those in need every year and this year we felt it was important to honor heroes of the past and future, which is why we selected the FDNY Fire Family Transport Foundation and the Pencil Fellows Program for our donations," said Lloyd Robinson, GAWDA president. "We are thrilled to be breaking the \$1 million mark in total donations over the years because it means that for over a decade our members have been making a difference in the lives of people who really need it."

FDNY Fire Family Transport Foundation is dedicated to the well-being of the fire department family; for recognition of the unique sacrifices that firefighters and their families selflessly make for the sake of all. The central focus of the foundation is assisting families of firefighters in their times of greatest need, by transporting firefighters, family members and department personnel to and from medical institutions both for care and family support.

The Pencil Program provides successful, career-minded juniors and seniors in New York City public high schools with dynamic learning experiences through full-time paid summer internship positions.

Previous benefactors of the GAWDA Gives Back campaign include Hawaii's Community Closet which received a donation of \$193,162 in 2010, WINGS "Women Involved in Nurturing, Giving, Sharing," in San Antonio, TX which received \$162,255.00 in 2009 and Ranfurly Homes for Children in Nassau, Bahamas which received \$136,030.00 in 2008.

The 2011 Annual GAWDA Convention takes place October 9 -11 at the Times Square Marriot Marquis.

About GAWDA

*Founded in 1945, the Gases and Welding Distributors Association (GAWDA) is dedicated to promoting the safe operation and economic vitality of distributors of industrial gases and related welding equipment supplies. To date, through the GAWDA Gives Back drive, GAWDA members have donated over \$1 million to charity organizations across the U.S. For more information, visit the association's website at [www.gawda.org](http://www.gawda.org)*