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Children's Book Author to Donate Proceeds to Heart Gallery of Tampa Bay

TAMPA, FL (Oct. 20, 2010) – The author of an award-winning new children's book says she will donate 75 percent of the net proceeds of book sales to benefit the Heart Gallery of Tampa Bay, a traveling exhibit – sponsored by the Children's Board of Hillsborough County and Hillsborough Kids, Inc. – featuring both photographs and audio messages from foster children needing adoption.

Lori Diez' new book, "Angel or Not? Angel for Sure!" is about the challenges of Angel Hennessy, a fourth grader in Catholic school who deals with issues of school, family, bullying and her faith. The bully forces her to make the decision to whether to be an angel or not.

"The choice – to do the right thing or not – keeps Angel on her toes," Diez says. "Like every child, at times she doesn't choose wisely and must pay the consequences for her choices. The story has a strong family presence as Angel often turns to her mother, father and siblings for advice and support. It is a fiction story but the characters are depicted in real life circumstances making it easy for the reader to connect with Angel or any of the characters."

Diez says she chose the Heart Gallery as the major benefactor of book sales because she herself was adopted.

"Although I was never in foster care, I was very fortunate and always felt extremely blessed to have two amazing people who chose to be my parents. I was loved and cared for, and most importantly, I was a member of a family.

"One year, during Lent when we were trying to fill our rice bowls with money, I told my parents 'If I get a dime from everyone I meet I will be able to feed all the hungry children.'" It was a big vision, but since it began, I have hoped to one day make a profound difference in the lives of children. Once the book was written, I knew that it was the opportunity that would allow my childhood dream to come true. I have decided to donate 75 percent of the profits from the sales of the book to the Children of the Heart Gallery of Tampa. With the monies generated, I will be helping the children in foster care to have a better childhood while they await adoption."

Diez, a mother of three and a dental hygienist by training, says she wrote the story so that her 11-year-old daughter, Alexis, could have a book with which she could relate. All three of Diez and her husband Randy's children have attended Catholic school, and the book is somewhat of a family affair, with Alexis providing the inspiration for Angel and middle son Mickey providing illustrations.

The book, an international book word award-winning finalist for children's fiction and children's religion, is available online at www.angelforsure.com.

The Children's Board of Hillsborough County serves as the leading voice and advocate for children and families in our community. The board is the only organization of its kind in Hillsborough County that generates

revenue to help children and families. The Children's Board is recognized nationally for its contributions to best practices in policies and programs aiding children and families. Citizens may visit www.childrensboard.org to learn more about the board's programs.