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For Immediate Release

Contact: Kelly Faville (978)-405-3199

## CIVIC-MINDED MILLENNIALS PREPARED TO REWARD OR PUNISH COMPANIES BASED ON COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL CAUSES

**National Survey Finds Millennials Steadfast Pro-Social Attitudes Drive New Rules of Engagement; Offer Businesses Untapped Opportunities**

**BOSTON**, Massachusetts, Oct. 24, 2006 – A national survey was released today that explores how corporate cause-related initiatives influence Millennials as consumers, employees and citizens. The 2006 Cone Millennial Cause Study, the first in-depth study of its kind, shows that 61% of Millennials, born between 1979 – 2001, feel personally responsible for making a difference in the world. This civic-minded generation, 78 million strong, not only believes it is their responsibility to make the world a better place, they (78%) believe that companies have a responsibility to join them in this effort. Millennials say they are prepared to reward or punish a company based on its commitment to social causes.

The 2006 Cone Millennial Cause Study was commissioned by Cone, Inc., an agency that develops and executes leading corporate cause initiatives, in cooperation with AMP Insights, the strategic planning and consumer insights division of AMP Agency, a youth-focused marketing agency.

An overwhelming 74% surveyed indicate they are more likely to pay attention to a company's overall messages when they see that the company has a deep commitment to a cause. Nearly nine out of ten Millennials surveyed, ages 13 – 25, stated that they are likely or very likely to switch from one brand to another (price and quality being equal) if the second brand is associated with a good cause. Moreover, the poll finds that as Millennials begin to enter the workforce, they not only have high expectations for themselves, but also for their employers. Nearly eight out of ten want to work for a company that cares about how it contributes to society, while more than half would refuse to work for an irresponsible corporation.

### ***Socially and Environmentally Responsible Businesses Reap Rewards from***

83% will trust a company more if it is socially/environmentally responsible.

74% are more likely to pay attention to a company's message when they see that the company has a deep commitment to a cause.

69% consider a company's social/environmental commitment when deciding where to shop.

89% are likely or very likely to switch from one brand to another (price and quality being equal) if the second brand is associated with a good cause.

66% will consider a company's social/environmental commitment when deciding whether to recommend its products and services.

### ***Millennials Have High Expectations of their Employers (of the 28% who describe themselves as full-time employees.)***

79% want to work for a company that cares about how it impacts and contributes to society.
69 % are aware of their employer's commitment to social/environmental causes.
64% say their company's social/environmental activities make them feel loyal to that company.
56% would refuse to work for an irresponsible corporation.

"To best reach Millennials, traditional marketing must evolve," explained Anastasia Toomey, Vice President, Consumer Insights, AMP Agency. "Technology has given the Millennial generation complete access to what is happening around the globe. They are attuned to natural and social world changing events and they have the knowledge and ability to support the causes they believe in. Due to the fractured landscape of media that these kids are wading around in, brands could truly benefit from finding a shared passion with their target."

"Pioneering companies are meeting Millennials high expectations by aligning with relevant social and environmental issues," explained Carol Cone, Chairman, Cone, Inc. "Companies need to provide hands-on cause-related experiences and then clearly and consistently share related societal impacts. This engagement and communication will create a generation of brand ambassadors – ready to stand-up and conquer pressing world issues, while being loyal to the brands, companies and employers that they trust most."

#### **Engaged Millennials are a Company's Most Loyal Brand Ambassadors**

According to the study, Millennials who actively volunteer are even more responsive to Cause Branding than their less engaged counterparts. These "Doers" volunteer at least once a week and represent nearly 20% of Millennials surveyed. Survey findings indicate that volunteerism unleashes a more engaged citizen, consumer and employee. The estimated 15.6 million Millennial "Doers" in this country are a company's most loyal brand ambassadors. To support the causes they care about, "Doers" will reward a company that meets their standards. At the same time, they are not afraid to refuse to work for an employer that lacks a sincere commitment to social issues.

#### **"Doers" are a Company's Most Loyal Brand Ambassadors and Employees**

42% who volunteer weekly describe their "ideal" work environment as a place that will help them make the world a better place, outranking all other factors, including high salary (41%) and flexible hours (37%).

87% who volunteer weekly have purchased a product that supports a cause in the past year; that number drops to 48% for non-volunteers.

71% who volunteer weekly are likely to speak out against a company that is NOT socially responsible as compared to 48% of non-volunteers.

"To be truly effective, corporations should use cause branding as a loyalty strategy," noted Ms. Cone. "They need to align their brand with a cause that is relevant, authentic, sustainable and engaging, as well as one that is true to the core brand identity. Most importantly, companies cannot be afraid to communicate their cause commitments with honesty and sincerity. Millennials want to know how their support of a specific brand or product is actually making a difference."

For more information about the 2006 Cone Millennial Cause Study or for a copy of the executive summary, businesses can contact Kiva Starr at Cone, Inc. (617.939.8335) or Allison Bacon at AMP Insights (617.837.8163).

#### **About The 2006 Cone Millennial Cause Study**

The 2006 Cone Millennial Cause Study presents the findings of an online survey conducted among a national probability sample of 1,800 respondents comprised of 895 males and 905 females, between the ages of 13 and 25 during the period of

5/16/06 -5/27/06. This survey captured the opinions, perceptions and beliefs of three distinct segments: Teens (13-17), College (18-22) and Young Adults (23-25). The margin of error is +/- 2.31 percentage points.

#### About Cone

Cone, Inc ([www.coneinc.com](http://www.coneinc.com)) is a strategy and communications agency engaged in building brand trust. Cone creates stakeholder loyalty and long-term relationships through the development and execution of Cause Branding™, Brand Marketing, Corporate Responsibility and Crisis Prevention and Management initiatives. Cone is a member of the Omnicom Group.

#### About AMP Insights

AMP Insights, the strategic planning and consumer insights division of AMP Agency, an Alloy Media + Marketing company (NASDAQ:ALOY), focuses on providing targeted knowledge and consumer insights to organizations in order to help them guide the strategic direction of their brands. For further information, please visit [www.alloymarketing.com](http://www.alloymarketing.com).

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Editor's Note: Case highlights, featuring corporate pioneers actively engaging Millennials, are available upon request. Contact: Kelly Faville, Cone Inc., (978)-405-3199 or [kfaville@coneinc.com](mailto:kfaville@coneinc.com).