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For Immediate Release

## FAMILY OWNED BUSINESS TURNS PERSONAL TRAGEDY INTO TRIUMPH

### ***S&S Electric establishes two scholarships for the Pulmonary Hypertension Association***

OLDSMAR, FL, June 12, 2006 — To everything, there is a season. For the Smith family, owners of S&S Electric in Oldsmar, it is a time to heal.

S&S Electric and the Smith family have partnered with the Pulmonary Hypertension Association (PHA) to establish two annual scholarship funds for patients afflicted with this disease. The scholarships will allow the recipients to attend the Association's International Conference. These scholarship funds were established in memory of Angela Smith-Kline and Barbara Smith who died of the illness.

"My daughter Angela passed away in October of 1995, and my wife, Barbara, in October of 2005," said Vern Smith, president of S&S Electric. "Barbara was passionate about finding a cure for pulmonary hypertension and helping those afflicted with the disease. Through these scholarships, our family, as well as the team members in our company, hope to carry on her mission to cure this disease."

Pulmonary hypertension is a rare blood vessel disorder of the lung in which the pressure in the pulmonary artery, the blood vessel that leads from the heart to the lungs, rises above normal levels and becomes life threatening.

Barbara's struggle with Primary Pulmonary Hypertension (PPH) defined much of her passion toward helping others. Her sister, Rachel, passed away from the disease in 1994, and her daughter, Angela, passed away in October 1995. Shortly after Angela's passing, Barbara found out that she too was afflicted with the disease. Barbara's sons, Chris and Shawn, recall their mother's quest to find a cure.

"In the 10 years she lived with the illness, she did not simply sit back and do nothing," Shawn Smith said of his mother. "That was not my mother's personality. She was thankful for the lifesaving treatment she was receiving, but she also remembered the difficulties she faced during her sister's and daughter's diagnoses and treatment. There was so little information available about PPH that even physicians did not know about the disease and treatment options."

So Barbara decided to leave much of the day-to-day work of the family business in the capable hands of her husband and children, and instead she focused on volunteering for the PHA.

Barbara worked tirelessly as a PHA volunteer, as a board member, as an event organizer and sending

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membership packets and information to PPH patients in order to help others learn more about the disease.

“She learned from firsthand experience that information is the key and that early detection and diagnosis is most important for effective treatment,” said Vern Smith. “That is why we are establishing the scholarship funds for the PHA’s National Conference.”

Because patients may not be able find the funds to attend the conference, the S&S and Smith Family Scholarship Funds will enable the recipients to not only attend the PHA 7th International Conference, June 23-25, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, but for future recipients to also attend future conferences. The conference allows patients and families to interact with each other as well as with the doctors in attendance.

“When Barbara and I attended our first PHA conference in 1996, we were amazed at what we saw,” said Vern Smith. “Doctors were interacting with everyone and people were discussing their experiences with others. It was a giant support mechanism and we knew we weren’t alone. The conference opened a door for our family and we hope that it will do the same for others.”

Candidates are encouraged to submit an application as soon as possible, but no later than April 16, 2006. A limited number of scholarships are available for adult patients, children with PH, and parent caregivers for minor children with PH. Please note: Scholarship applicants and recipients must be PHA members.

- 2006 Conference Scholarship Application Form (PDF)
- 2006 Conference Scholarship Application Form (Word)

“Through her work with the PHA, my mother touched many lives and gave others hope that they, too, could lead fulfilling, productive lives with the disease. She is greatly missed by her family, friends and fellow workers, so we hope that these scholarships will help her legacy of the mission for a cure live on,” concluded Chris Smith.

About S&S Electric:

With more than 300 employees, and offices in Oldsmar, Tampa, Sarasota and Ft. Myers, the company’s award-winning team of designers, installers and technicians are recognized throughout the industry for providing customers with value-added, reliable, quality system installations. For more information about S&S Electric and its many services, please visit [www.ss-electric.com](http://www.ss-electric.com).

About the Pulmonary Hypertension Association:

The Pulmonary Hypertension Association (PHA) is a nonprofit membership organization that provides a community of hope through mutual support, medical and public education, and research. Beginning in 1990, three patients and a family member working with their own doctors began to locate others with the condition. From its humble beginnings around a “kitchen table,” PHA has grown to incorporate over 6,000 members, and 19,000 additional supporters and friends from 61 nations. These include patients, caregivers, physicians and other health professionals treating the disease. For additional information about pulmonary hypertension, please visit [www.phassociation.org](http://www.phassociation.org).