IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JUNE 20, 2011

SHELTON STATE RED CROSS CLUB SUPPORTS STUDENTS IMPACTED BY RECENT STORMS
Students Believe Peer Support Most Beneficial for Emotional Healing

TUSCALOOSA, AL - Shelton State Community College opens the state’s only 2-year College storm-related support center, June 14, when the Red Cross Club’s Peer Support Center opens in the Kiwanis Room in the Shelton State Library. The center will be manned by trained students who believe a confidential peer support environment to discuss storm related experiences could yield important emotional relief for fellow students.

Tuscaloosa student, Tara Tinklepaugh, founded the Red Cross Club in the fall and initiated the creation of the Peer Support Center in response to the storms of April 27. She states, “We started the club to do something different than other people were providing to the victims of the storm. This was the best way to tap into people’s emotional side. They could get food and transportation somewhere else, but most people did not have anyone to talk to so we chose that direction.”

Kevin Burns, instructor of psychology for Shelton State and an American Red Cross Mental Health Disaster Specialist with a 20 year track record, serves as the club’s lead advisor. He has also counseled victims at the World Trade Center in New York following 9-11. Mr. Burns will oversee center operations and be readily available to refer students requiring additional counseling to various Tuscaloosa area mental health centers. He states, “I am proud of these students – they came up with this idea on their own and simply wish to help their fellow students.”

Resource information is available from support center volunteers to aid impacted students in finding transportation to and from class, lodging, and information from Tuscaloosa websites with lists of area service providers. Trained American Red Cross club members will be on call Tuesday 2 P.M. – 4 P.M. and Wednesday 11 P.M. – 1 P.M. each week through the summer semester.

For more information, please contact Kevin Burns, 205.391.3934, or Tara Tinklepaugh, 205.826.2017.

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