

Fritz Institute working toward a flatter world for disaster relief

BY Sarah Duxbury

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The past year's string of disasters, stretching from the Indian Ocean tsunami to the hurricane-battered Gulf Coast, highlighted the trouble many relief agencies have utilizing corporate resources, technology and expertise.

Enter Fritz Institute, which planted its nonprofit flag at the crossroads of humanitarian relief and the private sector. It is now launching Corporations for Humanity, and the business sector is rallying around its flag.

Early corporate members include Applied Materials, BearingPoint, General Motors, Harcourt Education, Harris Interactive, Heidrick & Struggles International, Intel, KPMG, Levi Strauss & Co., Microsoft and Philips Semiconductors.

Each of these companies has commit-

ted to sharing best practices in operations, supply-chain management and technology with the humanitarian sector. They also are contributing money and expertise to help Fritz Institute continue to improve how relief is delivered and tracked.

Opera finances in positive tenor

San Francisco Opera reported a small operating deficit for the 2004-2005 fiscal year, which counts as a happy ending.

The organization has faced serious financial challenges since 2001, which resulted in programming changes, layoffs and other extreme measures to achieve a stronger bottom line.

With a deficit of just \$207,000 -- less than 0.4 percent of its \$57.8 million annual budget -- it is "now back on a

path to financial stability and vitality," said Karl Mills, president of the San Francisco Opera Association.

Upcoming seasons will continue to be tight, as state funding for the arts has dried up and ticket sales have fallen short of expectations.

Incoming general director David Gockley will spend the early part of his tenure building a long-term financial model for the Opera. Gockley will replace Pamela Rosenberg, who is returning to Europe after five years in San Francisco.