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LION FORGE PARTNERS WITH UNITED WAY OF PUERTO RICO FOR DONATION OF PROFITS FROM PUERTO RICO STRONG ANTHOLOGY

ST. LOUIS, MO—**Just under six months since Hurricane Maria plowed through Puerto Rico with a destructive force that left island residents desperate for survival or forced to flee to the U.S. mainland, the island is still struggling to rebound.** Today, the St. Louis publisher announces their commitment to relief efforts in a partnership with United Way of Puerto Rico, in conjunction with the release of Puerto Rico Strong, a comics anthology **from some of today's top talent!**

All Lion Forge profits from the sales of Puerto Rico Strong will go to the Early Childhood Relief program. These specific initiatives in Puerto Rico to help the children and families **and provide hope include:**

- **Early Childhood Centers: Creation of Reading Corners**
- **Early Childhood Centers: Psychological Support for traumatic stress after a natural disaster**
- **Early Childhood Centers: Reestablishment of non-profit childcare facilities (Furniture, Materials, Equipment, Structure)**
- **Community Schools and Health Care Centers**

In addition, Lion Forge will match \$25,000 of all profits from the sales of Puerto Rico Strong, and Diamond Comic Distributors will donate 5 percent of retail sales to United Way of Puerto Rico.

“When a particular area of the world is struggling, it is everyone’s responsibility to find ways to help,” says Lion Forge founder David Steward II. **“We at Lion Forge are always looking for ways to bolster diversity of content and creators, and we thought the best way to help the people of Puerto Rico would be to highlight some of the unique voices in our industry with a deep connection to Puerto Rican heritage. We are donating 100**



percent of the book's profits to the ongoing relief efforts, in addition to matching the first \$25,000 raised."

"United Way of Puerto Rico feels blessed because there are organizations and people who are aware that our island still has a long way to recover. Initiatives like this one by Lion Forge and Diamond Comic Distributors show a lot of heart and are highly appreciated as our community continues aiming to return as close as possible to its **normal way of life prior to the strike of these natural disasters,"** established Samuel González, president of the United Way of Puerto Rico.

"We're grateful to Lion Forge for their efforts to give back to Puerto Rico and help as so many people begin to rebuild their lives," said Orv Kimbrough, president and CEO of United Way of Greater St. Louis. **"It's inspiring to see communities and sectors step up to make a positive difference, and this is exactly what the comic book industry is doing with Puerto Rico Strong."**

"Lion Forge has found a great way for the comic book community to aid a very worthy cause, and we are happy to follow their lead on making something positive happen for Puerto Rico," says Diamond President and CEO Steve Geppi.

Puerto Rico Strong is a comics anthology that explores what it means to be Puerto Rican and the diversity that exists within that concept, from today's most exciting Puerto Rican comics creators. All profits will go toward disaster relief and recovery programs to support Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico Strong is co-edited by **Lion Forge's own Desiree Rodriguez** and Hazel Newlevant, alongside Marco Lopez, Neil Schwartz, and Derek Ruiz.

Puerto Rico Strong features art and writing by Rosa Colón (Soda Pop Comics), Vita Ayala (Bitch Planet), Naomi Franquiz (Misfit City), Javier Cruz Winnik (A Reason to Smile!), Sabrina Cintron (La Borinquena), Tristan Tarwater (Hen & Chick), Fabian Nicieza (co-creator of Deadpool), Joamette Gil (Power & Magic), and many more!

Puerto Rico Strong is released today at finer comic shops everywhere, with profits going directly to those in need.

About United Way:

United Way fights for the health, education and financial stability of every person in every community. Supported by 2.9 million volunteers, 9.8 million donors worldwide and **\$4.7 billion raised every year, United Way is the world's largest privately-funded**



nonprofit. We're engaged in 1,800 communities across more than 40 countries and territories worldwide to create sustainable solutions to the challenges facing our communities. United Way partners include global, national and local businesses, nonprofits, government, civic and faith-based organizations, along with educators, labor leaders, health providers, senior citizens, students and more. For more information about United Way, please visit [UnitedWay.org](https://www.UnitedWay.org).

About Fondos Unidos of Puerto Rico (United Way of Puerto Rico)

United Way of Puerto Rico is a private nonprofit organization that for over 50 years has been dedicated to advance the common good, creating opportunities for a better life for all. Its focus is on education, income, and health as the building blocks to achieve a good quality of life. It currently provides financial support to 129 affiliated non-profit partner organizations and their services cover community segments of infants, children, youth, adults and seniors islandwide. United Way also has community impact programs such as the 2-1-1 of Puerto Rico Helpline (also online: 211pr.org), which provides information and referral on where to obtain assistance from local and national social service programs, governmental agencies and/or non-profit organizations. The Volunteer Center that, among other volunteer groups, supports a Youth Club that engages on **volunteer work in collaboration with schools and colleges, as well as the 'Sembrando Futuro, Para el Desarrollo de una Nueva Generación' (Planting for the Future for the Development of a New Generation)** cause, which provides the basis for promoting development and continuous learning for early childhood. United Way recruits people and organizations that bring the passion, expertise and resources needed to make things done. We invite you to be part of the change. You can contribute, volunteer and support a cause. That's what it means to LIVE UNITED®. For more information call at 787-728-8500, or at 2-1-1 in Puerto Rico; you can also visit us at fondosunidos.org, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter. For donations you can visit fupr.org/donaciones.

About Lion Forge Comics:

Lion Forge Comics strives to publish comics that everyone—regardless of background or ethnicity—**can identify with. The original graphic novel *Andre the Giant: Closer to Heaven* was nominated for three Glyph Awards, as well as the Dwayne McDuffie Award for Diversity. Lion Forge Comics also includes the Roar imprint for young adults and the CubHouse imprint for readers twelve and under. It is also home to the Magnetic Collection of premium and critically acclaimed comics and graphic novels, boasting multiple Eisner Award nominees. From licensed properties, including *Dreamworks-Voltron Legendary Defender*, original work from top independent creators, and the original and all-inclusive Catalyst Prime superhero universe, there is something for every level of comic fan, young and old, across multiple imprints and**



formats.

Lion Forge Comics—Comics for Everyone. Visit www.lionforge.com for more information.

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