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The Great Lace Up
Little Rockers Kids Marathon Kick-off Event to be Held Oct. 31

*Arkansas Children's Hospital sponsors registration event
on the lawn of the Clinton Presidential Library*

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (Oct. 6, 2009) – A registration kick-off event for the Little Rockers Kids Marathon will be held from 10 a.m. to noon Oct. 31 on the lawn of the Clinton Presidential Library. The kick-off event and the training program are sponsored by Arkansas Children's Hospital and Today's THV.

The 6th annual Little Rockers Kids Marathon Final Mile will begin at noon on Saturday, March 6, 2010, in the River Market District. Little Rockers is held in conjunction with the Little Rock Marathon, set for Sunday, March 7, 2010. The Little Rock Marathon and companion races are a project of and benefit Little Rock Parks & Recreation.

The Oct. 31 Little Rockers kick-off event will include free healthy snacks, music and a series of fun Halloween-themed obstacle course activities. Goody bags will be distributed to the first 600 participants. Kids are encouraged to pre-register for the kick-off event at www.littlerockmarathon.com.

“This is going to be a fun time for kids and their parents to come out and learn more about the Little Rockers and how they can start training for the big day in March,” said Geneva Hampton, executive director of the Little Rock Marathon. “We want to motivate students to commit to a health and fitness routine now, so they can reap the rewards later.”

Craig O'Neill, an anchor with KTHV, Channel 11, will serve as emcee for the morning, while Scout, the Arkansas Children's Hospital mascot, will help entertain participants. Both O'Neill and Scout will get things started that morning with a Monster Mash warm-up.

A series of activities, including broomstick hurdles, a pumpkin relay, wheelbarrow races, three-legged monster race and Mr. Bones relay race, will be held. After all five activities are completed, participants will get to log their first mile of the 26.2-mile marathon training program. Kids ages 7-12 who complete the training program from November-February will have the opportunity to complete their final mile in front of friends, family and spectators in March.

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The Little Rockers Kids Marathon Training Program, presented by the Arkansas Department of Health, was designed as a way to encourage more children to participate in ongoing fitness activities. Last year, more than 1,500 children registered for the Final Mile, while more than 4,700 kids throughout the state participated in the training program.

“We are proud to sponsor such an important fitness program for the kids in our community,” said Dr. Bonnie Taylor, medical director at Arkansas Children’s Hospital. “We hope this kick-off event reminds families that fitness can be fun in many different ways!”

For more information and to register a child for the Oct. 31 kick-off event, visit www.littlerockmarathon.com.

About Little Rockers Kids Marathon

The Little Rockers Kids Marathon encourages children ages 7-12 to become more active by following a fun, simple running and/or walking program. The goal for each child is to complete at least 25.2 miles before race day. Then, on race day, children who are properly registered and have reached their mileage goal will complete their final mile on the official Little Rock Marathon course in front of family, friends and thousands of spectators. □A child can participate through an official Little Rockers program at their school, church or civic organization. Or a child can participate at home with an adult’s help. Information on the 2010 Little Rockers Marathon and Little Rock Marathon can be found at www.littlerockmarathon.com.

About Little Rock Parks & Recreation

Little Rock Parks and Recreation (LRPR) oversees 53 parks, four community centers, the Adult Leisure Center, War Memorial Fitness Center, four swimming pools, two tennis centers, the River Market, the Riverfest Amphitheatre, three golf courses and the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History. The LRPR system includes more than 5,000 acres of designated parks and open space. In addition, the organization offers a wide-range of youth and adult recreational and sports leagues, after-school and summer playground programs for children ages 6-15, outdoor recreation, therapeutic recreation and programs for seniors. Funds raised will continue to support parks and recreational programs for all ages. For more information, visit www.lrpr.org.

About Arkansas Children’s Hospital

Arkansas Children’s Hospital is the only pediatric medical center in Arkansas and one of the largest in the United States serving children from birth to age 21. The campus spans 29 city blocks and houses 316 beds, a staff of approximately 500 physicians, 80 residents in pediatrics and pediatric specialties and more than 4,200 employees. The private, nonprofit healthcare facility boasts an internationally renowned reputation for medical breakthroughs and intensive treatments, unique surgical procedures and forward-thinking medical research - all dedicated to fulfilling our mission of enhancing, sustaining and restoring children’s health and development. ACH has ranked twice on FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For®, most recently at No. 85. For more information, visit www.archildrens.org.