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Press Release

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NineZeroGames.com

Nationally Recognized Advocate to Participate in NineZero Games

Riverside, CA – R.J. Feild, a Jurupa Valley High School Junior and a person with a disability, has agreed to be a spokesperson for the NineZero Games, a fundraising event sponsored by The Arc of Riverside County. This event takes place on October 11 and 12 at various venues throughout Beaumont and Banning, and seeks to raise funds and awareness for the prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD), the number one cause of intellectual disabilities.

Working through his school, R.J. has been a tireless advocate for students with disabilities for over three years. He has been to Sacramento on several occasions to speak on issues such as Foster Care and the California High School Exit Exam for individuals with intellectual and other disabilities. His advocacy efforts this year have gained him national attention.

The NineZero Games include a golf tournament on one of the Southern California's finest courses (Oak Valley Golf Club), an official World TeamTennis tournament for players of all levels, a tennis camp for those with and without disabilities, a challenging cycling event and a beautiful ride for those who simply enjoy biking, a morning scenic NineZero Walk-A-Thon, a healthy lifestyles family faire, a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders prevention conference, a Soccer tournament, and more. After these events, people will come together for a dinner and program to celebrate the participants, acknowledge sponsors and affirm The Arc of Riverside County's commitment to people with developmental disabilities. Money raised from the NineZero Games will be used to fund FASD prevention activities and the programs and services of The Arc of Riverside County.

The Arc of Riverside County presented R.J. with a special advocacy award for his efforts on behalf of people with disabilities at their recent annual banquet. Assemblyman John Benoit worked extensively with R.J. in an attempt to pass a state law requiring expectant mothers on

public assistance to undergo drug testing and enter a drug rehabilitation program if they test positive as a condition of remaining on public assistance. This bill has not yet passed.

R. J.'s story was featured on the CBS Evening News and in newspapers earlier this year related to this legislation. This issue is personal for R.J. because his mom drank during pregnancy and he strongly believes his disabilities are directly related to this. He has difficulty walking and has a visual impairment but despite these obstacles he is a successful student. Now, he helps The Arc of Riverside County convey their NineZero message of "nine months, zero alcohol" to young people in the Inland Empire.

Mary Beth Feild, R.J.'s adoptive mother, has encouraged her son and has helped make his accomplishments possible. "I'm very proud of what he is doing. He's concerned about many issues affecting people with disabilities, and he's an example to other kids, with and without disabilities," she said.

The Arc of Riverside County NineZero Project features a peer-to-peer training curriculum that is offered for free to all Riverside County high schools. This prevention campaign also uses public service announcements featuring Olympic athletes Keri Walsh and Holly McPeak and everyday people concerned about FASD, an interactive Web site (www.NineZero.org), and NineZero promotional items geared toward teens and young adults like T-shirts as well as temporary tattoos.

The Arc of Riverside County is a 55-year-old nonprofit organization that provides services, supports and advocacy for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families throughout Western Riverside County, and is located at 8138 Mar Vista Court, Riverside, CA 92504.

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