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COACH TO CURE MD CELEBRATES FOURTH SEASON WITH COACHES WEARING SIDELINE PATCH FOR SEPTEMBER 24 GAMES; PROGRAM WILL TOP MILLION DOLLAR MARK THIS YEAR

WACO, Texas – For the fourth year in a row, college football coaches nationwide will join together in support of the Coach to Cure MD program, which will be held during games of Saturday, September 24, 2011. The rapidly growing annual effort has raised nearly a million dollars to battle Duchenne muscular dystrophy, and should easily top the million-dollar plateau in 2011.

On September 24th, American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) members will wear a Coach to Cure MD logo patch on the sidelines and college football fans will be asked to donate to research projects supported by Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy, the largest nonprofit organization in the U.S. focused entirely on Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

Football fans can donate to Duchenne muscular dystrophy research by either going online to www.CoachtoCureMD.org or by texting the word CURE to 90999 (a $5 donation will automatically be added to your next phone bill).

Last year, more than 9,400 college coaches at 373 different institutions participated in the Coach to Cure MD event. Both those figures are well higher than in any of the program’s first two years (2008-09). The three year fundraising total is just shy of $875,000, putting Coach to Cure MD on pace to go well over one million dollars after this season.

Duchenne muscular dystrophy is the most common fatal genetic disorder diagnosed during childhood and primarily affects boys across all races and cultures. Boys and young men with Duchenne muscular dystrophy develop progressive muscle weakness that eventually causes loss of mobility, wheelchair dependency, and a decline in respiratory and cardiac function. Currently, there is no cure for Duchenne muscular dystrophy and limited therapeutic options exist.

“Our coaches have really embraced the Coach to Cure MD cause over the last three years,” said Grant Teaff, executive director of the AFCA and legendary former coach at Baylor University. “Because the disease affects so many young boys, it makes sense for college football coaches to step in and make a difference. We are proud to see so much support on the sidelines every September, from coast to coast at every level of play.”
“The “Coach to Cure MD” Campaign is an outstanding example of how the popularity and prestige of NCAA Football can be channeled to benefit an important and meaningful cause,” said Montana State head coach Rob Ash, who is the current president of the AFCA. “The exposure that our coaches and programs will provide to the effort to cure this terrible disease will be significant, and our game will make a difference in the lives of those people who are battling MD. We are happy and proud to be part of the effort to end Duchenne.”

“The coaching staff at Oregon State is honored to be a part of the Coach to Cure MD program to bring awareness to such a debilitating disease,” said Oregon State coach Mike Riley. “We are privileged in college football to work with outstanding student-athletes, but Duchenne robs young men and boys of this opportunity. With the help of college football fans across the country we have a chance to defeat this disease.”

In addition to the coaches’ efforts, families affected with Duchenne muscular dystrophy will also gather for fund-raising tailgate parties on campuses around the country to encourage more fans to get involved.

"Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy (PPMD) is thrilled to have the continued support of the AFCA as we head full speed into the fourth year of Coach to Cure MD," said Pat Furlong, founding president and CEO of PPMD. "This year we will undoubtedly hit the million dollar mark, which means continued funding of critical research for this devastating disorder. We are confident that with the AFCA on our team and the incredible support of participating universities across the country, we will end Duchenne.”

About the AFCA
The American Football Coaches Association was founded in 1922 and is considered the primary professional association for football coaches at all levels of competition. The 10,000-member organization includes more than 90 percent of head coaches at the 700-plus schools that sponsor football at the college level. Members include coaches from Europe, Canada, Australia, Japan and Mexico.

About PPMD
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy (PPMD) is a national not-for-profit organization founded in 1994 by parents of children with Duchenne and Becker muscular dystrophy. The organization’s mission is to end Duchenne. We accelerate research, raise our voices in Washington, demand optimal care for all young men and educate the global community. PPMD is headquartered in Middletown, Ohio with offices in Fort Lee, New Jersey. For more information, visit www.parentprojectmd.org.

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