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COACH TO CURE MD CELEBRATES SEVENTH SEASON WITH COACHES WEARING SIDELINE PATCH FOR SEPTEMBER 27 GAMES; PROGRAM HAD FULL PARTICIPATION AT FBS LEVEL LAST SEASON

WACO, Texas – For the sixth 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 27, 2014. The rapidly growing annual effort has raised more than a million dollars to battle Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

On September 27th, 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 (PPMD), the largest nonprofit organization in the U.S. focused entirely on Duchenne muscular dystrophy. More than 60 of those games will recognize a local Duchenne family on the field before or during the game.

Northwestern Mutual, one of America’s strongest corporate backers of college football, has served as the corporate sponsor for the program this year, making a major financial donation to PPMD’s medical research for a cure to Duchenne MD.

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 10,000 college coaches at more than 600 different institutions participated in Coach To Cure MD events. Both those figures are higher than in any of the program's first six years (2008-13). The five-year fundraising total is just over $1 million.

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 look forward to participating in Coach to Cure MD every year," said Grant Teaff, executive director of the AFCA and legendary former coach at Baylor University. "It is uplifting to see the increased fundraising totals each year, knowing this effort is truly making a difference in advancing Duchenne MD research.”
“The American Football Coaches Association is proud to be involved with raising funds and awareness for the fight against Duchenne muscular dystrophy,” said Ithaca College head coach and AFCA President Mike Welch. “The annual Coach To Cure MD program is a highlight of the college football season for everyone in our profession and we’re pleased to continue this for a seventh consecutive year. We continue to work toward the goal of curing this deadly 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.

"Since PPMD's inception twenty years ago, we have had one goal – to end Duchenne," said Pat Furlong, founding president and CEO of PPMD. "Raising awareness is one of the greatest tools we have to fight this horrible disease. Thanks to our seven-year partnership with the AFCA, more people know about Duchenne and more children are being diagnosed at an earlier age. The coaches that participate in this program are heroes to the Duchenne community. When a coach wears a patch on his arm September 27, he should know that families and friends around the country are cheering for him and thanking him. With the AFCA on our team, we will continue to tackle Duchenne and we couldn’t be more grateful."

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 Hackensack, New Jersey. For more information, visit www.parentprojectmd.org.

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