

CHARLOTTE JOINS NATIONAL MOVEMENT TO DEFEAT LUNG CANCER

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DATE: April 20, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Charlotte Teams Up with Chris Draft to Defeat Lung Cancer

CHARLOTTE -- The North Carolina Lung Cancer Partnership announces the Inaugural Free to Breathe® 5K & 1 mile Run/Walk & Rally in Charlotte. The event will take place on Saturday, May 19 at Park Road Park. Runners and walkers will raise funds for the Partnership. Lung cancer survivors may also register to be honored at the Rally, which begins at 8 a.m.

Lung cancer is estimated to kill more than 5,934 North Carolinians each year— more than breast, colon, and prostate cancers combined. These startling statistics are why area residents will unite with advocates across the country to raise awareness and vital research funding for lung cancer.

Lung cancer claimed the life of Keasha Draft, wife of former Carolina Panthers linebacker, Chris Draft, in late 2011. Keasha was also a member of the Charlotte Hornets Honeybee Dance Team. In her memory, Chris formed Team Draft and is partnering with the National Lung Cancer Partnership to bring much-needed attention and critical resources to lung cancer and will join lung cancer advocates and survivors on May 19 at Park Road Park for the Free to Breathe Charlotte as a tribute to Keasha.

Team Draft and the Partnership are committed to shattering the misconception that lung cancer is a “smoker’s disease.” The fact is, anybody can get lung cancer. Between 20,000 and 30,000 people who have never smoked—including Keasha—are diagnosed with lung cancer in the US each year. The smoking stigma impedes lung cancer research funding, which pales in comparison to funding for other major cancers and diseases.

“Lung cancer came into my house, and it took my wife. Too many families are affected by this horrible disease. It’s time to respond,” said Draft. “That’s why Keasha and I launched Team Draft. She wanted to be an inspiration to those battling the disease and we wanted to raise awareness so that other families wouldn’t have to go through what we went through. Team Draft is committed to changing the face of lung cancer, but it takes a team to tackle cancer, and we are proud to partner with the Partnership.”

“Lung Cancer is the number one cancer killer in this country but paradoxically, receives the least funding,” said Amy Cipau, President of the North Carolina Lung Cancer Partnership. “We really hope this event will not only be a fun day for the community but also raise awareness and funds for this terrible disease. I encourage everyone in the Charlotte area to join this movement that will help bring the attention and funding to lung cancer that it desperately needs.”

Free to Breathe has raised more than \$3.6 million nationally, with 100 percent of the net proceeds dedicated to making a difference for everyone affected by lung cancer and directly funding programs of change. In 2012, Free to Breathe events are also being held in Raleigh, Greensboro and Buies Creek.

To register, donate, sponsor or volunteer for a Free to Breathe® event, please visit www.FreetoBreathe.org/Charlotte.

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About the North Carolina Lung Cancer Partnership:

The North Carolina Lung Cancer Partnership is a 501©(3) nonprofit organization is the first state chapter of the National Lung Cancer Partnership the only lung cancer organization made up of leading doctors, researchers, patient advocates, and lung cancer survivors dedicated to raising public awareness of the disease and generating funding for lung cancer research. For more information please visit www.NCLungCancerPartnership.org.

About The Chris Draft Family Foundation and Team Draft

The Chris Draft Family Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation dedicated to strengthening communities by empowering families to live healthy lifestyles. The Foundation focuses on several primary initiatives with overarching themes that stress the importance of education, healthy lifestyles, character development, personal responsibility, self-discipline and physical fitness. To learn more about the Foundation, please visit www.chrisdraftfamilyfoundation.org.