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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LOCAL MOTHER HOSTS 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL EVENT TO CELEBRATE THE LIVES OF HER TWINS:  
EVENT FOCUSES ON RAISING AWARENESS AND FUNDS FOR FETAL SYNDROMES**

**Charlotte, NC** – In celebration of the survival of their twin daughters, a local family is organizing the third annual TTTS Race for Hope (part of a National Race Series) on September 20, 2008 at Freedom Park. The event will consist of a 5K Run/Walk, the Charlotte Mothers of Multiples Kids Fun Run, the NOMOTC Family Festival, and a Sponsor Expo.

Three years ago, the McGuinness' learned of the effects of fetal syndromes during their pregnancy with identical twin girls. Their daughters were diagnosed with Twin-to-Twin Transfusion Syndrome (TTTS) at 14 weeks into the pregnancy and they were given little hope of carrying the pregnancy full-term with healthy babies.

"This was our first pregnancy and it was heartbreaking to be given options such as termination, reduction, and a possible laser surgery that may or may not be successful in curing our babies," said Fetal Hope VP of Marketing and Fundraising and Charlotte Race Director, Talitha McGuinness. "What is a parent to do when there is little information and few options?"

Similar to the McGuinness', over 800,000 pregnancies each year are affected by fetal syndromes such as TTTS. TTTS is a disease of the placenta that affects multiple pregnancy births, and results in 15 deaths per day. Sadly, some identical twins and even in rare cases, triplets, share blood vessels across the placenta from which they draw their blood flow and nutrition. As a result, one baby receives very little blood flow and can die from severe anemia, while the other baby receives too much blood flow and can die from heart failure. Because the babies share these essential vessels, if one baby dies, the other will soon follow.

Fortunately for the McGuinness', they were able to have in utero surgery with world-renowned Dr. Ruben Quintero. This procedure has an 85% chance of one baby surviving, and a 50% chance of both babies' survival. However, it is currently the only procedure that gives both babies a chance.

The McGuinness' are among a fortunate few to have delivered not one, but two healthy babies without causative health effects. It is because of this that McGuinness decided to join the Fetal Hope

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Foundation, an organization that provides support to families affected by TTTS and other fetal syndromes. This September, she along with family and friends and many local supporters and sponsors, will host the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual TTTS Race for Hope at Freedom Park, Charlotte, North Carolina. The event will take place on Saturday, September 20, 2008, in conjunction with a long-time Charlotte event, the Festival in the Park.

“We are honored to be hosting this event. It’s so exciting to see the community come out in support of such a great cause, and it’s especially humbling to meet those directly affected by TTTS and other fetal syndromes,” said McGuinness. “The TTTS Race for Hope means different things to so many, especially those needing a way to honor babies lost to fetal syndromes. I am happy to be a part of that tradition.”

The event will be held at Charlotte’s Freedom Park where participants will enjoy the race, along with one of the largest post-race expos and family friendly festivals with the Festival in the Park. Sponsors such as Carolinas Healthcare System’s The Women’s Institute, McGowan Hood & Felder, Great Harvest, the Charlotte Mothers of Multiples and many more will participate at the sponsor expo. For more information, please contact Talitha McGuinness at (980) 721-5799.

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*The McGuinness family, along with their miracle daughters will be available for interviews prior to and during the event.*