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Lady of America Fitness Centers to Host National *Ab Crunch* Challenge to Benefit St. Jude Children's Research Hospital®

Saving Children's Lives at the Core of Fitness Challenge

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Lady of America Franchise Corporation (LOAFC), the world's largest chain of full-service women's fitness centers, is sponsoring a national *Ab Crunch* Challenge on Saturday, March 29, 2008, to raise needed funds for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, one of the premier centers for the research and treatment of pediatric cancer and other catastrophic childhood diseases.

The national fitness challenge will be held at participating Lady of America, Ladies Workout Express and Workout Express locations across the country. Gym members and non-members alike are invited to take the challenge. Beginning in January, *Ab Crunch* Challenge participants will train for 10 weeks to build up strength and endurance to perform abdominal crunches for one hour straight on the day of the event. While training, participants will solicit sponsorships toward the collective goal of donating \$1 million for St. Jude.

"St. Jude is an incredible hospital where doctors and researchers are committed to saving the lives of children with cancer and other deadly diseases," explains Gerry Weber, LOAFC's president and chief executive officer. "Lady of America Franchise Corporation is proud to support the work of St. Jude through an event that will simultaneously raise needed money for the hospital and the fitness level of the participants."

"We are grateful to Lady of America Fitness Centers and its members for their support of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital," said John P. Moses, chief executive officer of ALSAC, the fundraising organization of St. Jude. "Those participating in this unique event do so because they care about our patients and their families, who find the strength every day to battle cancer and other catastrophic illnesses. The money donated from this fitness challenge will help the hospital continue its life-saving work of finding cures and saving children, and ensure that no child is ever turned away because of a family's inability to pay."

The *Ab Crunch* Challenge was first organized in 2006 as a small philanthropic event by Ladies Workout Express franchisee Tony Parziale of New Jersey. Nicknamed "Captain Crunch," Mr. Parziale has earned two Guinness Book of World Record titles for performing more than 4,000 sit-ups within a one hour time limit.

"It is truly gratifying to see what was initially a local event grow into a national campaign that will benefit a very worthy cause while educating women on the importance of strengthening their core as a first step to greater fitness," says Mr. Parziale. "We also hope to make history by creating a new world record for the most abdominal crunches done in one hour by a group."

For more information about the *Ab Crunch* Challenge, or to find a Lady of America location near you, visit www.LadyofAmerica.com.

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