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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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More Walkers and Funds at Ruth Harbor

May 14, 2010, Des Moines, Iowa – RUTH HARBOR, a home and program for young women facing unplanned pregnancies, recently held its fifth annual “Walk for Life” to raise awareness and raise funds for its mission of caring for young women and their babies.

Even with the unseasonable temperature of 43 degrees, 235 committed community members arrived for the 2-mile, family-friendly walk. It was the fifth time to set a record for number of walkers (20% more than 2009).

Initial gifts and pledges are over \$27,000 at this time, an increase over 2009, and contributions are expected to continue as others decide to help. The fundraising goal for the event is \$35,000.

The “Walk for Life” was held on the Meredith Trail near downtown Des Moines and coincided with Mother’s Day weekend, as well as the ninth anniversary of operation for Ruth Harbor.

Continued Growth

“We couldn’t be happier with 20% growth in participation, particularly in the cool temperatures,” said Mark McDougal, Executive Director at Ruth Harbor. “Coupled with increased funds over last year, we are encouraged by the number of people who believe in the Ruth Harbor mission!”

McDougal continued, “Most of the expenses for the Walk were cared for by key constituents so individuals are giving with confidence knowing they are actually funding the support that young women need to make positive life-change, give birth to a healthy baby, and become a contributing member of our community. Ruth Harbor constituents are generally committed and loyal because they truly believe in Ruth Harbor’s mission.”

While sponsored walkers are encouraged to come to the walk on Meredith Trail, the unique program is designed so that walkers can raise funds on their own, wherever and whenever they choose.

“We are communicating that individuals who did not come to the event can still walk on their own or simply contribute and help us toward our goal of \$35,000,” McDougal explained.

Raising Awareness Is Also Key

When walkers find sponsors, they naturally talk to them about Ruth Harbor and how it helps young women facing unplanned pregnancies. McDougal and others believe it is important for a broad section of the community to know about Ruth Harbor’s services and support for clients. Therefore, the Walk helps raise awareness as well as funds.

New Technology

A big asset for walkers this year was the addition of an “on line” presence that included a personalized web site, tracking, and communication capability complete with graphics and personal email integration. Several walkers

reported how much easier it was to raise funds this year or the increased effectiveness they had with their personal web site, which often included their own picture and text of why they became involved.

Sponsors were also able to contribute, communicate, and support walkers on line.

More Information Available

To see more details, results, and photos from Ruth Harbor's 2010 Walk for Life, visit www.RuthHarbor.org.

For more information, contact the Ruth Harbor offices at (515) 279-4661 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday or by email through its web site.

About Ruth Harbor:

Ruth Harbor is a program and home for young women who are facing unplanned pregnancies. It is located on the southwest corner of 42nd and Ingersoll in Des Moines. The organization was founded by three local women and opened its doors to serve residents for the first time in May 2001. Ruth Harbor was incorporated with the state of Iowa in 1996, granted non-profit status by the I.R.S. in 1997, and is licensed as a community residential care facility by the Iowa Department of Human Services.

Beyond meeting the basic food, shelter, and transportation needs of its residents, Ruth Harbor's programming includes:

- Professional Counseling
- Quality Health Care
- Life-skill Training
- Parent Training and Adoption Education
- Spiritual Guidance
- Education and/or Employment Support

The programs and operating budget are funded through contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations. Government funding is not utilized. For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact the Ruth Harbor office at (515) 279-4661 or visit its website at www.RuthHarbor.org.

Mission Statement:

Through grace, Ruth Harbor provides a Christ-centered home, programs and comprehensive services for women and teens with unplanned pregnancies resulting in positive life change.

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