



WINNERS OF “THE CHALLENGE” FITNESS COMPETITION TO BE ANNOUNCED ON APRIL 24th IN ALBUQUERQUE

12- Week Competition Filled with Heart-Warming and Life-Changing Success Stories

For Immediate Release

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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.—After 12 weeks of physical and mental transformation, results of the local fitness competition “**The Challenge**,” will be announced at a special event honoring participants on Friday, April 24, 2009 at Sandia Resort and Casino, with doors opening at 6 p.m. and the presentation starting at 6:30 p.m.

The Challenge took place in Albuquerque January 17 – April 11 (another competition also took place in Farmington January 24 – April 18). Participants were judged in three areas—Physical Transformation (comparison of “before” and “after” photos), Mental Transformation (written essay about challenges, learnings, changes) and Body Composition (weight or body fat loss or gain).

The Challenge is sponsored by Defined Fitness and is organized by Mark and Laura George, whose son Michael George went missing while snowboarding at Wolf Creek in January 2008.

Highlights and success stories from the competition include:

- In Albuquerque, there were **371 contestants**, of which approximately **40% completed The Challenge** (took final photos, weighed in, turned in essay about their transformation)
- **Total amount of weight loss was greater than past years—a total of 3,112.5 lbs.**
- **Average body fat loss per person was 10.3%**
- One contestant lost more than 70 lbs and 24% body fat in just 12 weeks (followed by others who lost by 60-65 lbs.). [*See below for other success stories*]

“We are blessed to hear so many success stories from participants whose lives have been forever changed by The Challenge,” said Laura George. “The support and friendships that have been formed over these past 12 weeks among the participants has been amazing. They seem to forget about their problems and are truly happy for others successes. It is truly touching for me and brings tears to my eyes.”

Proceeds from The Challenge will benefit the **Michael George – Kyle Kerschen Search Aid Foundation**, which offers a source of financial aid, assistance, and encouragement to families suffering the pain of missing family members and the high costs of search, rescue and recovery. The Foundation aims to provide financial assistance to meet some of the costs of search helicopter and fixed-wing aircraft when necessary, to engage specially-trained search dogs when appropriate and to aid in meeting some of the base operations costs of volunteers involved in organized search efforts. The Foundation does not supplant or replace organized local and state government search and rescue organizations, but can support the works of these organizations through direct association with affected families.

Additional participant success stories include:



- One woman was in desperate need of a lung transplant and her doctor told her that he would not even consider putting her on the transplant list until she lost weight and got healthier. Through The Challenge, she lost 11 lbs. and 15% body fat, and is now in the shape she needs to be in for her transplant.
- Another participant had a knee replacement right before The Challenge, and throughout the course of the competition was able to lose over 42 lbs. and set a goal to be able to walk around the Academy in under 1 hour. Her starting time was 1 hour and 25 minutes, and she finished her last timed walk in only 59 minutes. All the challengers lined up and cheered her on as she came across the finish line.
- Other Challengers were so out of shape that their health was at risk. Several organized walks/runs around the Academy were held and all participants were able to improve their time by an average of 10-20 minutes throughout the competition.

For more information about The Challenge, visit www.thechallengenm.com. For additional details or to coordinate interviews, contact Jessica Trumble at (505) 266-7220 or jtrumble@rjc.com.

Defined Fitness is New Mexico's premier workout facility with multiple locations in Albuquerque, Rio Rancho and Farmington, offering state-of-the art equipment, group fitness, personal training, nutrition, tanning, day care and more, including the new Parisi Speed School. Defined Fitness, celebrated its 20th anniversary in the Albuquerque community in 2008, and is the city's original "no contract" health club. For more information, visit www.defined.com. Defined Fitness, every BODY wins!

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