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“HOOPS FOR HOPE” TO BENEFIT CENTER FOR GRIEVING CHILDREN

Free-throw program offers fun new way for businesses and individuals to support Center

PORTLAND, ME – The Maine Red Claws, presented by Unum, today joined with the Center for Grieving Children to announce a new program, Hoops for Hope. The announcement was made at a press conference held at the Center for Grieving Children in Portland. General Dynamics Bath Iron Works was introduced as a 2012-2013 sponsor for the Maine Red Claws and title sponsor for the new program.

Through the Hoops for Hope program, individuals and corporations will be able to pledge a dollar amount for every free throw the Maine Red Claws make at home during the 2012-13 season. Through General Dynamics Bath Iron Works’ sponsorship of the team, the Red Claws will pledge \$20 for every successful free throw this season with an expected donation of approximately \$12,500.

Jim DeMartini, company spokesperson for General Dynamics Bath Iron Works said, “BIW is very proud to be a sponsor for the Red Claws this season and to help launch this important program with the Center for Grieving Children. We look forward to the rest of the season and many free throws that will ultimately benefit the young members of our communities who are dealing with the tragic loss of a loved one.”

There are several ways that businesses and individuals can support the Center for Grieving Children through the Hoops for Hope program. They can make pledges online at cgcmaine.org/hoopsforhope, or pick up pledge cards at Red Claws home games, the Center for Grieving Children (555 Forest Avenue in Portland), or the Red Claws Team Store (413 Congress Street in Portland).

“The Maine Red Claws are proud of our role in the community and exceptionally proud to partner with the Center for Grieving Children on the Hoops for Hope program,” Red Claws President Bill Ryan, Jr. said. “The Center offers such unique and necessary services and has helped more than 66,000 kids and their families over 25 years. We are thrilled to be able to offer the Center for Grieving Children and the community what we hope will be a unique and fun way to support such a tremendous organization.”

“We appreciate that the name of this new program draws attention to the Center’s unique role in helping grieving children and families rediscover hope,” said Anne Lynch, executive director of the Center. “This new partnership will both build awareness of the Center as a unique community resource and generate funding to help keep our services free for families.”

Lynch noted that the Center now offers in both Portland and Sanford its peer support groups for bereaved children and their families.

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Michael E. Dubyak, a Maine Red Claws team owner, and Chairman, President and CEO of WEX Inc., welcomed the new partnership. Last year, marking the Center's 25th anniversary of service, WEX Inc contributed \$50,000 to the Center. In 2005, Dubyak co-chaired the Center's \$2.7 million capital campaign to buy and remodel its home on Forest Avenue in Portland.

"I'm pleased the Red Claws could create a program that brings the Center support from corporations and also reaches out to the community with a new way to support the Center," Dubyak said. "The Center is truly a beacon of light that creates, for children and our community, benefits that are immediate and long lasting."

The Center for Grieving Children, based in Portland, Maine, serves more than 4,000 grieving children, teens, families, and young adults annually through peer support, outreach, and education. Offering our services at no charge, for as long as people need them, the Center's mission is to provide loving support that encourages the safe expression of grief and loss and fosters each individual's resilience and emotional well-being. The Center reaches individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, and relies on financial contributions from individuals, businesses, foundations, United Way, and special events. For more information, call (207) 775-5216 or visit www.cqcmaine.org.

Maine Red Claws – 2012-13 marks the fourth season for the Maine Red Claws. The Red Claws have been the minor league affiliate of the Boston Celtic since their inaugural season of 2009-10, and 2012-13 marks the first season of a new "hybrid" affiliation between the two teams. Under the hybrid model, the Boston Celtics have contracted to run the basketball operations for the Maine Red Claws, including the hiring and training of the coaching and training staff as well as the all player transactions and will act as the Red Claws' sole NBA partner. The Red Claws play their home games at the Portland Expo Building. The franchise is owned and operated by Maine Basketball, LLC, which is principally owned by Bill Ryan Sr., the retired chairman of TD Bank, and Bill Ryan Jr. who serves as the team's President and Chairman.