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**For Immediate Release**

January 12, 2006

**Quad City Health Initiative Wellness Champions Will Launch Moon Walk 2006!**

On March 31, 2006, the Wellness Champions of the Quad City Health Initiative (QCHI) will launch a community "walk" to the moon and back in a race to accumulate a community total of 477,400 miles walked before competitor communities in Peoria and Rockford, Illinois. The Moon Walk started in Peoria in 2003. In 2004 and 2005, the communities of Rockford and Peoria raced to see which community could "walk" to the moon the fastest. This year, they invited the Quad Cities to join the race. And, the pressure is on because Peoria has won the last two years; last year they finished the race with 4,000 walkers in just 10 weeks! This year's race will officially end June 30, 2006.

"We are very excited about bringing the Moon Walk event to the Quad Cities," says Nicole Carkner, Project Coordinator for Quad City Health Initiative, "because the Wellness Champions are committed to helping Quad City residents make healthy choices regarding diet and exercise. The Moon Walk is a fun way to start or reinforce the importance of daily exercise to maintaining our health and preventing disease. Moreover, we couldn't turn down a challenge from Peoria and Rockford!"

Registration for the Moon Walk is free. Over 40 organizations have already formed teams and designated Team Captains who will oversee this moon mission. Organizations or businesses that are interested in forming a Moon Walk team should contact Mission Control (the QCHI office) at 563-421-2826 by January 31, 2006. Mission Control also welcomes calls from organizations willing to become a Moon Walk sponsor by making an in-kind contribution to the effort. Individuals and community members who want to participate in Moon Walk 2006 will be able to register with Team Captains at Moon Walk Satellite locations to be announced in March.

Once registered, Moon Walkers will keep daily logs of their mileage and report weekly tallies to their Team Captains. Other types of exercise can be converted into "miles

walked” using the Moon Walk conversion chart. Every week during the race, Mission Control will total our community’s miles and check-in on the progress of our competitors.

In QCHI's 2002 Community Health Assessment, obesity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol (all risk factors for cardiovascular disease) emerged as critical issues for the health of our region. Since December 2002, the Wellness Champions team has been working to reverse these trends by promoting daily exercise, nutrition and regular screenings for health risk factors. The Wellness Champions team includes about 75 individual representatives from 52 organizations across the Quad City community.

The Quad City Health Initiative (QCHI) is a community partnership in active pursuit of a healthier community. The Initiative seeks to be a catalyst for improving the health and overall quality of life within the Quad City community. The Initiative raises awareness of health issues, encourages or creates projects to address gaps in health services and fosters community collaboration in all aspects of health. Major financial sponsors of the Initiative are Trinity Regional Health System and Genesis Health System. For more information or to join the efforts of the Quad City Health Initiative, please call 563-421-2815 or visit our website at [www.qchealthinitiative.org](http://www.qchealthinitiative.org).

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