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## MEDIA ALERT

BIRMINGHAM AREA RACER STEVE JOHNSON TO  
HOST STUDENTS ON FIELD TRIP TO 2015 U.S.  
ARMY/NATIONAL HOT ROD ASSOCIATION CAREER  
DAY PROGRAM

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### WHO:

Birmingham, Alabama area drag bike competitor, Steve Johnson and his team, Steve Johnson Racing, are set to host a group of middle school students at the in the 2015 U.S. Army/National Hot Rod Association Y.E.S. career day program at the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series Auto Club Finals in Pomona, California, Friday, November 13, 2015.

As guests for the day of the Steve Johnson Racing Team, the students will also be treated to Racers Who Care Quick Tips on Winning in Life life skills presentations made by pro-racers, based on their personal career experiences, and will enjoy racer-guided Pit Tours to see the Tips being enacted in real life by race teams as they prepare to compete in the NHRA season finale.

This race day program is made possible by a grant from The William T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation and by the support of the U. S. Army, the NHRA and Steve Johnson Racing.

Included in RWC's field trip group will be middle school students from SOARS Charter Academy, young people from Boys Republic, both of which are located near Pomona.

#### **STEVE JOHNSON:**

Steve Johnson, who will be hosting the RWC group of students and making a Quick Tips on Winning in Life Presentation to them on race day at the NHRA Finals event, competes on an NHRA Pro Stock Motorcycle in the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series. Johnson was instrumental in the start up of Racers Who Care, Inc. and has worked with children and teens through RWC

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since its 1993 inception. Johnson currently hails from Irondale, Alabama, near Birmingham. In 1993, Johnson was one of the first to make a Quick Tips on Winning in Life Presentation, and is RWC's most experienced presenter.

Johnson owns and competes for the Steve Johnson Racing Team in the NHRA's Pro Stock Motorcycle Class. He has competed on other Series and types of motorcycle racing, as well, from time to time winning championships. In 1987 and 1989, he was Drag Bike USA's Pro Stock Motorcycle Champion, and in 1989, he won the American Motorcyclist Association's Rebel Nationals. In 2007, Johnson finished among the top 10 in the NHRA Pro Stock Motorcycle Class. In 2008, he posted back to back wins in Indianapolis and Charlotte, earning him a brief second in point standings position. He has secured the U.S. Nationals Championship twice, and finished fifth in the Pro Stock Motorcycle Class in 2014.

Other volunteers generously assisting with the field trip during are: Tina Melendez, from Venice, California, Jean Page, from Van Nuys, California, and Janna Hitchcock, who will travel from Phoenix, Arizona at her own expense to participate. Janna is RWC's Arizona Quick Tips on Winning in Life Presentation Team Coordinator.

### **RACERS:**

Other racers to be involved in inspiring kids to believe in themselves and in their dreams include: From Corona, California, Jack Beckman, who drives the Infinite Hero Foundation 2015 Dodge Charger R/T Fuel Funny Car for Don Shumacher Racing; Cruz Pedregon, who acting as his own crew chief, drives a Toyota Camry Fuel Funny Car for the Snap-On Tools/WIX Filters/Toyota Racing Team. Both Beckman and Pedregon hold NHRA Series Championships in the Fuel Funny Car category. Additionally, joining in the day's activities for kids will be John Lombardo, Jr., who drives the Lucas Oil Top Alcohol Funny Car for the NAPA Batteries/Lucas Oil Top Alcohol Funny Car Team; and Jason Wieck, driver of a Supercomp/Top Dragster for Jason Wieck Racing.

### **The U.S. ARMY/NHRA Y.E.S. PROGRAM:**

NHRA Youth & Education Services (Y.E.S.) program presented by the U.S. Army is motorsports' first and only full-time event dedicated to educational programming. The program is presented on track grounds during select NHRA events and provides high school and college-aged students with real world lessons about career options and positive goal-setting.

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Students participate in a compelling and informational session led by NHRA drivers, including U.S. Army Top Fuel driver Tony Schumacher, other NHRA Representatives, and U.S. Army Soldiers. Participants can also visit the U.S. Army's Strength in Action Zone, an experience that explores the elements that give U.S. Army Soldiers a strength like no other with a variety of fully-interactive fitness, educational, and other technical components.

In 2015, the NHRA's Y.E.S. program will continue its 27th year of empowering young people with information about career choices and reaching their goals. With the help of the U.S. Army, the program continues to reach over 25,000 students a year nationwide.

### **THE WILLIAM T. AND EILEEN L. NORRIS FOUNDATION:**

Kenneth T. Norris, Sr. created the beginnings of Norris Industries with a metal stamping business with 15 employees and 7,000 square feet of space. The company was the first to create a seamless bullet cartridge and became the largest supplier of ammunition to the United States for World War II. The company grew, both through internal expansion and a process of selective acquisition, into a company with 16 divisions, some 12,000 employees and record sales for 1973 exceeding \$375 million. These divisions included Price Pfister.

Norris Industries supported entries on virtually every major racing circuit in North America, from the US Auto Club Championship trail to the NASCAR Grand National Stock Car circuit and both the Trans-Am and Can-Am series. In 1974 the Norris Industries Formula 5000 team consisted of Sam Posey, Jon Woodner and Skip Barber driving Norris Talons. The Talon were built by Jack McCormack; they weighed 1,450 lbs and could accelerate from zero to sixty miles per hour in 3.1 seconds. The Talon is powered by a 305 cubic inch stock block and a Chevrolet V-8 type engine capable of supplying 550 horsepower.

The first race was in Mid-Ohio, June 2, 1974. Woodner came 15th and Posey came 18th. The second race was at Mosport Park, June 15, 1974, where Posey came 15th and Woodner came 20th. In the third race at Watkins Glen, July 14, 1974, Posey came 5th and Woodner came 23rd. At Road America, July 18, 1974, Woodner came 6th and Posey came 23rd. At the fifth race at Ontario Motor Speedway, September 1, 1974, Woodner came 8th and Posey came 10th. Woodner came 6th Posey came 22nd and Barber did not qualify from heats at the 6th race in Laguna Seca, October 13, 1974. Their last race was at Riverside, October 17, 1974, where Posey came 20th and Woodner 24th.

Kenneth T. Norris, who was perhaps most well known for his philanthropy, particularly in the Los Angeles, California area, Norris set up the Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation, contributing to the construction of the USC Kenneth T. Norris Jr. Comprehensive Cancer Center and Hospital, making substantial gifts to the Huntington Library, KCET TV station and contributing \$1 million to help build the 450-seat Norris Theatre in Rolling Hills Estates, near Los Angeles. The foundation also supports the Discovery Science Center, the Shriners Hospital for Children-Los Angeles, Team Prime Time at Emerson Middle School, the Museum of Making Music, Special Olympics Southern California School Partnership Program, and the Fresh Start Clinic at Rady Children's Hospital. They have donated \$10,000 to Midnight Mission and another \$10,000 to TreePeople.

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## **PARTICIPATING WITH RACERS WHO CARE IN THE Y.E.S. PROGRAM:**

Students from **Boys Republic** will be participating with RWC in the U.S. Army/NHRA Y.E.S. Program. Boys Republic is a private, nonprofit, nonsectarian school and treatment community for troubled youngsters. Since its founding in 1907, it has guided more than 30,000 at-risk teenage boys and girls toward productive, fulfilling lives.

On its central school and farm in Chino Hills, California, and in residential and day treatment centers in other communities, Boys Republic and its companion program, Girls Republic, help children in desperate need find within themselves the resources and skills to begin meaningful lives on their own.

Boys Republic seeks to give adolescent youth with behavioral, educational, and emotional difficulties an opportunity to achieve their maximum potential for responsible, self-directed life within the community.

Every attempt is made to involve family members in the rehabilitation process and to bring about the reunification of the family. We consider the development of academic, vocational and social skills essential in assisting the youth we serve to return to the community as useful, productive citizens.

**SOAR Charter Academy** is a K-8 public charter school that is free to all children and is a non-profit public benefit corporation. SOAR's educational program is based on the belief that education is a shared responsibility between the students, faculty, parents, and the community. The co-founders of SOAR are all teachers with over 69 years experience in education with strong beliefs about how children learn. Their vision is to provide a dynamic standards-based education for every child in a diverse community using an integrated curriculum stressing academic excellence and character development. The Academy's leaders and staff believe in educating the whole child and preparing him/her to be an outstanding, active citizen in their communities. By integrating the academic and social curriculum and using an innovative instructional schedule, SOAR provides an exemplary and well-rounded K-8 education. The School's emphasis is on the whole child and the mission is to produce students that not only excel beyond the state's academic standards but that the students will become well-rounded, creative, responsible, critical thinkers who will be prepared to make a difference in the 21st Century. Every student is required to apply what they learn in character education to a variety of community service projects.

## **WHY:**

Quick Tips on Winning in Life racer presentations to children's groups, schools, hospitals are an avenue through which professional racers can give back to the communities where they live and race, by inspiring, affirming, empowering, and fueling the dreams of children and teens, and encouraging them to believe in themselves and reach for their dreams.

The Racer Quick Tips Presentations and Race Day Tours center on key universal truths RWC calls Quick Tips on Winning in Life, applicable to all children and teens regardless of age, cultural background, or life experience: find something to do in life that you really love, study, learn the art of teamwork, find a mentor, take the long view, be flexible with your dreams and goals, avoid the path of least resistance, and more. Racers share with kids their own personal experiences centered around these Quick Tips.

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Racers Who Care, Inc. is a Van Nuys, California-based 501c3 charitable corporation, founded in 1993, that works with auto, boat, motorcycle, truck and even snowmobile racers dedicated to making a positive difference for our next generation. In Southern California, and throughout the U.S. in communities surrounding their tracks, RWC's racers have unforgettably impacted kids with exciting observations on how to succeed, presented by people who have -- very publicly, and in a field perceived as ruthless, tough and unforgiving.

## **CONTACT:**

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## **FURTHER INFORMATION:**

**WWW.HEADS-UP-PERFORMANCE.COM  
WWW.NORRISFOUNDATION.ORG  
WWW.SOARCHARTERACADEMY.ORG  
WWW.BOYSREPUBLIC.ORG  
WWW.GOARMY.COM/ARMY-RACING/.../YES-PROGRAM.HTM  
WWW.NHRA.COM  
WWW.STEVEJOHNSONRACING.COM  
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WWW.CRUZPEDREGONRACING.COM  
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