

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Media Contact: Aisha Harris  
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770-417-1665 ext. 313**Two rival college football teams, Georgia Tech and UGA, are 'sticking' together for a worthy cause**

**Atlanta, GA, November 19, 2009** – On Saturday, November 28<sup>th</sup> college football teams, Georgia Institute of Technology (GA Tech) and University of Georgia (UGA) will play in the 116<sup>th</sup> rivalry game nicknamed, 'clean, old-fashioned hate' at Bobby Dodd stadium on the campus of GA Tech. However, this year's game will highlight the only unity between the two teams; H.E.R.O. for Children, Inc., a nonprofit committed to improving the quality of life for children infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS. The schools have student-led philanthropy organizations that support H.E.R.O., GT HEROs and UGA HEROs. Over the past five years the students have raised more than one million dollars for the organization, while hosting annual events on their respective campuses for the children that feature fun and games.

The teams will wear helmet stickers featuring the logo of their respective collegiate HERO organizations and 'stick together' for a great cause on the cusp of World AIDS Day, which is December 1<sup>st</sup>. The stickers will highlight the fact that in the United States, Georgia ranks sixth highest in reported pediatric and adolescent HIV/AIDS cases (see [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)). Almost 33 percent of H.E.R.O. kids are HIV positive and the other 67 percent have an infected parent, sibling or residential relative. Approximately 25 percent of HERO children have lost a parent to HIV/AIDS complications. UGA HEROs Executive Director Joanna Harbin says, "Six years ago, no one was providing quality of life services to children in Georgia affected by HIV/AIDS or even recognizing the need for such programming. Today UGA HEROs is one of the most recognizable philanthropies on our campus, being named UGA's "Organization of the Year" three years in a row and breaking fundraising records. While these accomplishments are exciting, it is the smiles on the HERO children's faces and the moments we share with these kids that keep our members motivated and our cause alive at UGA."

"The game is going to set a precedent by bringing the two schools together for the first time in history to lend their support to help raise awareness for children affected and infected by HIV/AIDS in Georgia by wearing helmet stickers during the game! GT HEROs is thrilled to share in this unified vision." explains GT HEROs Executive Director, Brent Clark. HERO allows the two schools to continue to compete but at a level that has rewards far beyond bragging rights, including a direct impact in the lives of kids they serve through their philanthropic efforts. Both team coaches have taken leadership roles by working with students on their campuses to build stronger networks.

UGA head football coach, Mark Richt is an original HERO board member, and currently serves as an honorary board member for the organization. GA Tech head football coach, Paul Johnson came on board to work with the students this year. "Both Coaches Richt and Johnson are community-service-oriented individuals who work diligently to instill the value of 'giving back' in their teams. We are honored that they have chosen to come together to recognize our organization and the population we serve during their Thanksgiving game. We are pleased to count the students and coaches at UGA and GT amongst our most ardent supporters." said H.E.R.O. Executive Director, Donna Drakes. The social responsibility being built into the moral fiber of the students will span generations. Over 2500 GT and UGA students have joined the fight to help by supporting HERO's award winning programs.

**About H.E.R.O. for Children**

Hearts Everywhere Reaching Out for Children, Inc.'s mission is to improve the quality of life for children infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS through enriching programs, unforgettable experiences, and connections with the community. H.E.R.O. was founded in 2003 by two young men who had separate but similar experiences working with children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Though basic needs (food, housing, and medical attention) were being addressed, no specific 'quality of life' (QOL) care services were provided. Research in Georgia uncovered that only 12 of 500 HIV/AIDS service organizations offered support to children, and none addressed QOL needs. As a result, H.E.R.O. for Children was created. H.E.R.O. defines quality of life as the degree to which an individual enjoys physical, social, and emotional well-being, and sees him/herself as being able to experience future success and fulfillment. Under this umbrella, we offer life skills development, emotional support through mentoring relationships, and expanded life exposure through a wide variety of opportunities and experiences. For more information please visit: [www.heroforchildren.org](http://www.heroforchildren.org), [www.gtheros.org](http://www.gtheros.org) and [www.ugaheros.org](http://www.ugaheros.org).