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NATIONAL RUNAWAY SAFELINE'S ANNUAL FUNDRAISER, SPIRIT OF YOUTH, A SUCCESS!

A Sold Out Crowd Broke Previous Records for the National Runaway Safeline

CHICAGO – The **National Runaway Safeline** (NRS) and co-chairs **Joyce Sapir** of Deerfield and **Troy McDonald Kane** of Winfield are proud to announce that this year's annual benefit, **Spirit of Youth**, held at Navy Pier's Festival Hall **Saturday, Oct. 15** was a great success for the organization having already raised nearly \$170,000 and anticipates hitting \$200,000* with more than 400 guests. The new format for 2016 featured an indoor festival with street flair that included cuisine from various popular food trucks including **Beaver Doughnuts, Fat Shallot, BabyCakes, Courageous Cupcakes, The Slide Ride** and **Yum Dum** parked inside the festival hall, a wine and beer garden featuring **Lagunitas Brewing Company**, live music, carnival games, both silent and live auctions and more. Proceeds from the Spirit of Youth Festival directly benefit NRS' crisis hotline and online services it provides to runaway, homeless and at-risk youth across the nation. For more information on NRS go to 1800RUNAWAY.org.

In addition to a silent auction, a live auction was held with prizes including United Airline business class tickets to anywhere United flies, an Italian get away and Chicago Blackhawks' tickets. The gala guests experienced a variety of food, drinks, music and carnival games during the Saturday night Festival. The 2016 Spirit of Youth Award was presented to the **First Nonprofit Foundation** for their support of youth in crisis.

Spirit of Youth co-chair Sapir said, "This year's Spirit of Youth was a great alternative to traditional galas as our guests were able to go on rides, play games and experience Chicago's food truck scene all in a casual environment while still raising much needed funds for the National Runaway Safeline." co-chair McDonald Kane added, "It was such a fun time to see everyone enjoying Spirit of Youth and we were able to meet our goal of doubling attendees at this new venue because people believe in NRS and wanted to support its mission."

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Executive Director Maureen Blaha was also pleased with the event, “I am so thankful for the amount of support Spirit of Youth received this year. In addition to the hard work of our co-chairs, the board and all of our volunteers; we also had tremendous support from our sponsors, our guests and online silent auction bidders from around the country. This year’s Spirit of Youth showed an increase in both attendance and overall financial support than previous SOY events.”

*This is a preliminary fund raising figure as the Spirit of Youth silent online auction is live until 5 p.m. (CST) Wednesday, Nov. 30 at 1800RUNAWAY.org/about-us/events. The final fund raising figure will be available after December 1.

About the National Runaway Safeline

The National Runaway Safeline (NRS), formerly known as the National Runaway Switchboard, established in 1971, serves as the federally-designated national communication system for runaway and homeless youth. Annually, NRS, with the support of more than 120 volunteers, makes 250,000 connections to help and hope through hotline, online and offline resources. Through its crisis hotline (1-800-RUNAWAY) and online (1800RUNAWAY.org) services, NRS provides crisis intervention, referrals to local resources, and education and prevention services to youth, families and community members throughout the country 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. More than 15,000 youth have been reunited with their families through NRS’ Home Free program done in collaboration with Greyhound Lines, Inc.

2016 Spirit of Youth Festival Sponsors

Platinum Sponsors: EY Partners, Longest Day of Golf and United Airlines.

Gold Sponsors: Aim National Leasing, Carlton Technologies, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Tube and Iron, Greyhound Lines, Ken Lavelle, Stephen and Rosemary Mack, Olympic Steel, Radio Flyer, The SMB Help Desk, Inc., Vibes and The Wolfort Family Foundation.

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