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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Online Tool Serves 1 Million Grown-up “Heart Kids”

(November 1, 2007 – Philadelphia, PA) The Adult Congenital Heart Association, in partnership with the International Society of Adult Congenital Cardiac Disease and Verve Internet Solutions, announces the launch of the newly updated Adult Congenital Heart Disease Clinic Directory, designed to help grown up “heart kids” find life-saving specialized care.

There are currently over one million adults in the United States living with congenital heart defects. Most underwent open-heart surgery as an infant or child, and many believe themselves to be “fixed”. However, recent evidence shows that heart procedures performed on young children may weaken over time, leading to serious health complications as early as young adulthood. Due to a severe shortage of cardiac centers equipped to care for these patients once they become adults, many of these pioneering survivors struggle to find appropriate care. The on-line directory is the first tool of its kind to offer a comprehensive listing of over 50 centers specializing in the care of adult congenital heart patients nationwide.

The Adult Congenital Heart Association (ACHA) was formed to improve and prolong the lives of adults living with heart defects. “Our mission is to make sure that heart defect survivors get the care they need throughout their lifetime, not just until age 18,” said ACHA President Amy Verstappen. “We want everyone to know that, if you had childhood heart surgery, you need to get life-long cardiac care, even if you were told you’d been fixed. If you have a more unusual defect, it is essential that you get care from experts in your condition. That’s why the new Clinic Directory is so crucial – finally there is a way for patients to find the right life-long care.”

ACHA teamed up last year with Verve Internet Solutions to create the first version of the Clinic Directory to help adults with CHD locate and access specialized care. This version of the Directory shows statistics drawn from January 1-December 31, 2006, updating the 2005 data previously displayed. In keeping clinic information current, ACHA was able to locate new clinics and learn of closures, making the search for specialized care as easy as possible. An interactive map has also been added to help users navigate the landscape of ACHD clinics in North America.

Verve Internet Solutions is a full-service web development company specializing in health care, education, and nonprofit sector. “We were very excited to work with ACHA on this important project,” said Verve Internet Solutions President/Founder, Leanne Bergey. “It’s not often we’re invited to work on a project that will literally save lives. Our team worked extensively with ACHA’s board members and medical advisors to create online tools that patients and their families can use to seek better medical care. It’s been an exciting collaboration.”

The Clinic Directory, the only existing database of national adult CHD clinics, receives funding and research support by the International Society for Adult Congenital Cardiac Disease (ISACCD). This online tool allows the user to search for local clinics that treat adult congenital heart defects, and evaluate clinics based on the annual number of patients they see

ACHA Press Release – ACHD Clinic Directory Launch

and CHD procedures they perform. Not only will the directory help adults living with congenital heart defects make more informed decisions regarding their health, it will also be an invaluable resource to the medical community to help obtain the appropriate specialized care for adults living with congenital heart defects.

For more information about the Adult Congenital Heart Association, contact (888) 921-ACHA, or visit the website at www.achaheart.org. For more information about the International Society of Adult Congenital Cardiac Disease, call (919) 861-5578, or go to www.isaccd.org. For more information about Verve Internet Solutions, contact (866) 672-2666 or visit www.verveinternet.com.

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