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## **MENTORING CHARLESTON'S YOUTH MAIN FOCUS OF 2004 WIN4LIFE PROGRAM**

### **Family Circle Cup Celebrates Third Year as Title Sponsor**

**CHARLESTON, SC (January 29, 2004)** –When Leslie Allen started the WIN4LIFE program in Charleston two years ago, one of the most important goals was to expose the kids to the many opportunities that exist off the court in the world of professional tennis. The philosophy of the program is simple, hard work prepares you for your future. Over the past two years, the Leslie Allen Foundation and the Family Circle Cup have realized that goal and much more through the WIN4LIFE program in Charleston. This year's WIN4LIFE Program will officially start Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup> with the kickoff event held at the Family Circle Tennis Center on Daniel Island.

“What makes this project so rewarding for the magazine and the tournament is to see first hand the positive influence the WIN4LIFE program has on the kids,” commented Frankie Whelan, Executive Director of the Family Circle Cup. “We are proud to be part of a program that nurtures individual growth in children and makes them realize their full potential.”

Since January of 2002 more than 50 kids have participated in the Charleston WIN4LIFE program. Again, this year another twenty-five kids from the Charleston area were selected from a long list of applicants for the 2004 program. Many of the past WIN4LIFE students will be returning this year to serve as Team Leaders to help the new kids who are just starting the program. The Family Circle Cup is the only WTA Tour event currently to sponsor this program.

In 2002 Allen founded the Leslie Allen Foundation, a non-profit organization to help young people through tennis develop the life skills needed to be successful. Because of her career in professional tennis both on the court and off, Allen can share her experiences with the children as well as give them a glimpse of all the opportunities that life has to give if you work hard and set goals in your life. Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the Charleston program is that the kids get to experience a professional tennis tournament from all sides. The LAF motto is “Tennis is more than just hitting a ball.”

The goal of the WIN4LIFE program is to show kids that tennis can afford them a wealth of opportunities but even more important is to help them understand that they need to be ready when the door of opportunity opens. The program focuses on the 4D's – desire, dedication, determination and discipline as the keys to success.

“It is so encouraging to see kids embrace the 4 D's and to use them in daily life,” stated Allen, Founder of the WIN4LIFE Program. “From listening to the students, parents and coaches speak about their WIN4LIFE experiences, I know that it is having a positive impact on their lives. Because of Family Circle Cup's commitment and support of this program, students in Charleston are given new opportunities and learning to be leaders.”

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A committee comprised of local tennis coaches helped Allen select 25 kids from the Charleston area to be involved in this year's program. The WIN4LIFE program will span over a ten-week period and center around five sessions starting on Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup>. All the sessions will be held on Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and will focus on life on and off the court. In addition to the Family Circle Tennis Center, the Harper Student Center at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and the College of Charleston have once again agreed to serve as host sites for one or more WIN4LIFE sessions.

The interactive sessions will develop their life skills as well as help them improve their tennis game. The mentoring seminars will focus on subjects like improving your communication, fitness and nutrition, preparing for college, careers behind the scenes in pro tennis and tennis history. As a testament to the success of the program, many of the children from the past WIN4LIFE programs will serve as Team Leaders for this year's group.

The culmination of the WIN4LIFE program is a unique look into the world of professional tennis by attending the Family Circle Cup. On Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup> both the new students and alumni will attend the qualifying matches and have an opportunity to watch some of the up and coming stars of tomorrow on the Family Circle Tennis Center courts. Last year's students had the opportunity to have a special sit down with top tennis star Lindsay Davenport. Four kids from the program will be awarded a once in a lifetime opportunity to go behind the scenes at the Family Circle Cup. In 2003 four students met with key professionals who worked behind the scenes to put on this internationally recognized Tier 1 event including journalists, computer technicians, cameramen, television producers, event staff and WTA Tour staff. The students were also able to meet television commentators Pam Shriver and Mary Joe Fernandez as well as tennis legend Martina Navratilova.

The 2004 Family Circle Cup, owned and operated by *Family Circle* magazine, will be held April 10-18 at the Family Circle Tennis Center in Charleston, South Carolina. The tournament is held at the Family Circle Tennis Center located on Daniel Island which has in house a full service event management staff capable of handling all aspects of an event including ticketing, operations, sales, advertising, marketing and public relations. For more information on the Family Circle Cup and the Family Circle Tennis Center, please call (800) 677-2293 or (843) 856-7900. Information can also be accessed by contacting the tournament's official website at [www.familycirclecup.com](http://www.familycirclecup.com).

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