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“FROM WORK TO PLAY – BUILDING LASTING BONDS”

TORONTO – July 17th 2009 Over 300 cyclists and volunteers will take to the road on July 26, 2009 in support of the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation (PWA) on a six-day, 600 km bike ride from Toronto to Montreal. Last year, the Friends For Life Bike Rally raised over a million dollars.

One of those riders will be Linda Edmond, who became involved with the Bike Rally thanks to her work as a paediatric nurse at The Hospital for Sick Children. It was there that she met a single mother and her 4-month old child, who were both HIV positive. That encounter really affected Linda, as she believed that there were not enough resources in the community to help individuals in similar situations.

The Toronto People With AIDS Foundation supports people living with HIV/AIDS by services such as a food bank which includes baby formula, peer counselling, financial assistance and holiday hampers during the holidays. Witnessing all the services that PWA provides, Linda knew that “it was an organization that [she] wanted to help.”

Now a fourth year rider, Linda says, “The ride is an incredible experience. Although it is a real challenge - both physically and emotionally - I look forward to it every year. The diversity and spirit of the riders is wonderful. We laugh, we sweat, and we keep one another peddling forward. These people and the cause have changed my life in so many ways. Over the years, I have raised over \$10,000 for the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation. It feels great to help those in need!”

Michael Cress, Co-Chair of the Bike Rally, says the need for funds is constantly growing. “In this difficult year with more and more cutbacks, we need support for core services like our food programs, treatment resources and financial assistance for men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS in our community.”

For more information about the Friends For Life Bike Rally in support of the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation, please visit: www.bikerally.org.

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To contact Linda Edmond call (905) 793-5139.

For further information:

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About the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation

The Toronto People With AIDS Foundation exists to promote the health and well-being of all people living with HIV/AIDS by providing accessible, direct, and practical support services. It is Canada's largest direct support service agency for people living with HIV/AIDS. For more information, please visit: www.pwatoronto.org