



## **CHARGERS QB PHILIP RIVERS LAUNCHES "RIVERS OF HOPE FOUNDATION" TO HELP FOSTER CHILDREN**

**San Diego (April 19, 2010)** – San Diego Chargers Pro Bowl quarterback Philip Rivers and his wife Tiffany announced the launch of the Rivers of Hope Foundation, their official charity, at a press conference at Sea World San Diego today.

The foundation, which will focus on helping foster children in San Diego County find permanent loving homes and their own sense of self worth, played host to more than a dozen foster kids at the event, which featured a private dinner program with several of Sea World's animals and trainers.

"Tiffany and I are very excited to launch the Rivers of Hope Foundation," said Rivers, who will begin his seventh season with the Chargers this Fall. "We are truly blessed to have five healthy children and we are reminded daily how important family truly is. We believe every child should have a loving and supportive family, and it's our goal, through Rivers of Hope, to help unite the foster kids of San Diego County with adoptive parents. At the same time, we want these children who have been through so much to be reminded that people really do care and that there is hope."

Rivers announced three major programs that his new foundation will be funding in 2010 and beyond, all which will work toward the foundation's mission of helping foster children in San Diego County, and all which will be initially funded by Rivers' own personal donations to Rivers of Hope.

The first such program is The Heart Gallery, a traveling photographic exhibit created to find forever families for children in foster care. The Heart Gallery of America is a collaborative project of over 120 Heart Galleries across the United States (and growing) designed to increase the number of adoptive families for children needing homes in our community.

Rivers of Hope has committed up to \$13,000 in 2010 (and \$8,000 in each of the next three years) to fund the San Diego chapter of The Heart Gallery. Rivers of Hope works with the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency and other organizations to find events and other opportunities to display photos of children in San Diego County in need of loving families.

"Finding permanent homes and having positive influence in the lives of children in foster care is among the most important and meaningful work we do at the County's Health and Human Services Agency," said Nick Macchione, the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency Director, who was on hand to accept a check for the program. "We are thankful for Philip and Tiffany Rivers for their vision and partnership in making a difference in the lives of these children."

In addition to the Heart Gallery, which focuses on finding adoptive families for foster children, Rivers also announced two more programs Rivers of Hope will fund in order to benefit the kids currently in the foster care system and awaiting adoption. These programs will be operated in conjunction with *Promises2Kids*, a nonprofit organization that has served abused and neglected children in San Diego County for the last 29 years, offering a broad array of support programs.

The first of these two programs is the Rivers of Hope Birthday Club, which will ensure that the approximately 1,000 foster children who will not be returning to live with a relative and will be available to be adopted over the course of the next year will receive a \$25 gift card on their special day. Rivers of Hope has committed at least \$22,500 each year for the next four years to provide these gifts, which not only give the children the chance to select their own gifts, but also reminds them that someone cares, and remembers.

The other program is the Something Special Fund, which provides foster youth with additional funds for items and activities their foster parents cannot or will not provide. Such support can include the purchase of sports equipment, art supplies, a musical instrument, or even a prom dress or class ring. Up to \$250 in financial support is provided on an 'as needed' basis and upon the request of a social worker. In 2010, Rivers of Hope has committed to funding "something special" for approximately 90 foster kids waiting to be adopted. This is a commitment of at least \$22,500.

"Nothing is harder for a child than hoping and waiting for someone to say you are worthwhile and wanted," said Susan Golding, President and CEO of Promises2Kids, who was also on hand to accept a check for these two programs. "Promises2Kids is delighted to be a partner with the Rivers of Hope Foundation. Our mission and the goals of Rivers of Hope are to help improve the lives of abused and neglected children, especially those waiting to find permanent and loving homes. The funding support from the Rivers of Hope Foundation will brighten the lives of these children and will provide each child awaiting adoption a gift card on their birthday. The Rivers of Hope Foundation will also help these kids through our Something Special Fund which gives foster children all the things that most children expect parents to provide and these children do not have - tutoring, camps, music lessons, sports equipment and uniforms, class ring and other activities."

In all, Philip Rivers announced funding of more than \$150,000 for these programs over the next four years at today's event. However, the Pro Bowl quarterback indicated that these programs will be just the tip of the iceberg in the foundation's plans to help foster children.

"Tiffany and I have a strong passion to help these children," said Rivers, who also announced the launch of the foundation's official website, *RiversOfHopeFoundation.com*, at the event. "Every year there are approximately 400 foster children available for adoption in San Diego County that do not get adopted. We are going to continue to develop programs and work with like-minded organizations to bring that number down as low as we possibly can. We will do this through raising awareness of children looking for forever families, helping prospective adoptive parents find these children and taking care of the kids still in the system. I hope that others in San Diego will join us in this effort to help these children."

For more information on the Rivers of Hope Foundation, and to view the children currently featured in the Heart Gallery, go to [www.RiversofHopeFoundation.com](http://www.RiversofHopeFoundation.com).