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Attitudes in Reverse®
PO Box 3127
Princeton, NJ 08543
www.attitudesinreverse.org

Co-Founders Tricia and Kurt Baker
609-945-3200
tricia@attitudesinreverse.org
kurt@attitudesinreverse.org

AttitudesIn Reverse® LaunchesPhoenix Chapter To Save More Lives through itsMental-Health Education Program

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY (June 4, 2016) – On June 10, 2016, Tricia Baker and her daughter Katelyn, Co-Founders of the Princeton-based Attitudes In Reverse® (AIR™) will travel to Phoenix, AZ, to establish its third chapter of its 100-percent volunteer, nonprofit organization and expand its mission of saving young people’s lives through education about mental health, related disorders and suicide prevention. In Phoenix, Tricia and Katelyn will meet up with Kat Loveland, a fellow fan of the popular TV program *Supernatural*, which served as the connection point for her and Tricia Baker and led to Kat’s interest in running the Phoenix AIR chapter in partnership with her friend Susan Ladigo.

Loveland learned about AIR while volunteering at the Phoenix convention of *Supernatural*, a popular television show, in February 2015. “I heard about AIR while running the mics during a panel. Then, I started following AIR online and I learned that Jared Padalecki’s *Always Keep Fighting* campaign supports AIR,” Kat said. Padalecki stars in *Supernatural* and has been supporting AIR since meeting Tricia and Katelyn Baker at a *Supernatural* convention in San Francisco in January 2015.

“During a meet-and-greet session, Jared shared that he had recently lost a long-time friend to suicide and he wanted to support organizations whose missions were to prevent suicide, so I raised my hand and said, ‘That’s what we do.’ He has supported us through his *Always Keep Fighting* campaign ever since,” Tricia said. “This connection has given us great visibility through social media. We also have been exhibiting at the *Supernatural* conventions since June of 2015, where several fans have expressed a passion for our cause and an interest in establishing AIR chapters in their states.”

“We launched our California chapter in November, and other chapters will be launched in Minnesota in August and Texas in January,” Tricia added. “We are so grateful to the *Supernatural* family – actors, crew and fans – and so excited to be able to spread our message of hope and healing to many more young people throughout the country. I am especially grateful to the Mitchell Kosterman, Clif Kosterman and Jason Fischer, producers of the *Supernatural Fan Movie*. Thanks to them including AIR in the documentary on the SPN Fandom, volunteer teams are stepping forward across the country.”

“Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 10- to 24-year-olds and mental health education is critical for preventing suicide. We teach students how to recognize the signs of mental health disorders and encourage them to seek help if symptoms persist for any length of time. We reinforce the fact that these are real, biologically based illnesses; that they are nothing to be embarrassed about and they are highly treatable,” Tricia said.

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“Jared is a terrific role model by being open about his struggles with depression, anxiety and suicidal thoughts. The more people we have talking about mental health disorders, the more progress we will make in eliminating stigma and the more likely people will be to seek help when they need it,” Tricia stated.

As Kat knows people who have mental health issues and wanted to help spread the word that help is available and effective, when she saw Jared at AIR’s California chapter launch event, she thought she would do the same thing in Phoenix. She writes the *Supernatural Family Central* blog (spnfamilycentral.com) and wanted to highlight what fans can do for each other and for the actors’ charity work, so she contacted Tricia for an interview. Since then, Kat began a small fundraiser for AIR in February 2015, selling art by *Supernatural* fans whom she met through Twitter.

Since then, Kat has raised significantly more funds specifically for the Phoenix AIR chapter launch event that will take place on June 11, 2016 from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Glendale Renaissance Hotel in Glendale, AZ. In addition to Tricia, Katelyn and Kat, Donna Jacobs another passionate supporter of AIR’s mission who Kat met through Twitter, will speak at the event.

Another highlight of the chapter launch event will be AIR’s IN THEIR SHOES™ exhibit. In this powerful display, the shoes have tags featuring statements representing thoughts youth may have when they have emotional or mental difficulties: for example, “*Why can’t I be happy?*”; “*I don’t belong anywhere.*”; “*I can’t get out of bed most days.*” The goal is to build empathy and understanding among those who are not experiencing such struggles, and to show those who are struggling that they are not alone. Kat and her fellow volunteers have collected 135 pairs of shoes for the exhibit to match the average number of individuals aged 10 to 24 years in Arizona who die by suicide each year.

Shoes donated by Padalecki, his costar Jensen Ackles, and other *Supernatural* actors and crew members make up the VIP section of the shoe exhibit. The tags on these shoes have inspirational messages from the shoe donors. For example, Padalecki’s says, “Always Keep Fighting.”

Kat and Susan have decided to include butterflies in the chapter launch event. “We have magnetic butterflies that people can take with them as a memorial or positive idea of pushing through the darkness. We have metal tree art that we will put the butterflies on it. People can write names of loved ones or positive sayings, attach them to the tree and take butterflies. We will display the tree at the table on Sunday after the event,” Kat said.

To learn more about the launch of AIR’s Phoenix Chapter, search for AIR Arizona Attitudes in Reverse on Facebook. To learn more about AIR, visit www.attitudesinreverse.org.

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Attitudes In Reverse® (AIR™) was established by Tricia, Kurt and Katelyn Baker of Plainsboro, NJ, in 2010, soon after their son/brother Kenny died by suicide following a long battle against severe depression and anxiety. Their mission is to save lives by educating students about mental health, related disorders and suicide prevention. Since January 2011, they have presented to more than 25,000 students in middle and high schools and colleges in New Jersey, New York and Vermont. AIR™ recently began offering Youth Mental Health First AID instruction. AIR™ includes the AIR Dogs: Paws for Minds™ program, bringing dogs into schools to help students de-stress and engage in the conversation about mental health. In addition, displaced dogs with the ability to serve as Emotional Support Dogs, are matched with individuals who have mental health disorders or developmental disabilities, thereby saving two lives with each match. For more information about AIR™, please visit www.attitudesinreverse.org or call 609-945-3200.