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**Attitudes in Reverse®, a Small, Local Nonprofit, to Be Known as Far Away as Africa  
AIR and a Georgia Resident's *Climbing Kili for AIR Campaign* Aim to Save Lives  
through Education about Mental Health**

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY (April 4, 2013) – One out of every nine adolescents seriously considers suicide and one of every 12 attempts to take his own life, according to a 2011 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Furthermore, suicide is the third leading cause of death among individuals between 15 and 24 years of age. Attitudes in Reverse® (AIR), a Princeton-based nonprofit organization, strives to reverse these statistics by reversing negative attitudes about mental health disorders. AIR's mission will soon be expanded far beyond New Jersey, resulting from an online connection with Georgia resident and mountain climber Karen Griffin Jolley.

AIR was established in 2010 by Tricia, Kurt and Katelyn Baker of Plainsboro, NJ, soon after their son/brother completed suicide following a long battle with severe depression and anxiety. Not long after AIR established its presence on Facebook that year, Jolley discovered AIR online and began communicating with Tricia Baker.

"I connected with the Bakers' and Kenny's story on many levels. I've struggled with major depression all my life and I had a lot of difficulty in my late teens. I also connected to Katelyn because I lost my youngest brother in '99," Jolley said. "And I'm an animal lover," she added, referring to the Bakers' love of dogs and work with them to spark conversations about mental health disorders and suicide during community events with their Pomeranian Miki, who received the American Kennel Club's Award for Canine Excellence in 2011.

The Bakers' strategy is to educate students in middle and high schools and colleges about mental health, related disorders and suicide prevention, and to encourage students to seek help when the signs of mental health disorders become evident. When the school staff allows, the Bakers bring Miki along with them for the presentations, and sometimes in the hallway to offer stress relief to students between classes.

In their first two years, the Bakers presented to more than 10,000 students in middle and high schools in New Jersey and at Binghamton University in New York State. Over the next several months, they will present to several more New Jersey schools, Norwich University in Vermont and Central Georgia Tech, where Jolley is a psychology instructor. She has already begun to share AIR's message with her students and she plans to deliver the official *Coming Up for Air* presentation to students at her school, as well as other colleges, and middle and high schools in the area.

"I'm constantly impressed with what the Bakers are doing, what they have accomplished and how they're honoring Kenny. I believe this program will be nationwide one day. It's so important. I know they've helped so many people to feel less alone," Jolley said. "On days when I'm dragging, I think about all the Bakers are doing and I tell myself, 'Get up and get moving.'"

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Jolley has also found inspiration from the porters and guides she met when she climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in June 2011 with her daughter Anna, who was in Africa for a study abroad experience. "The porters' and guides' sole purpose is to get climbers up and down the mountain safely. I was touched so deeply by their strong work ethic, as well as their sincere kindness, that I often think of them when I need a motivational boost in my daily life in the United States," Jolley said. "When I have difficulties at work or in my personal life, I think about the porters and guides who are climbing Kili while providing kindness and service to the many folks trekking upward. I call on their strength to help me get through tough days. And I still use their advice and take my life 'pole, pole' as I attempt to reach my personal summits of each day!" she added. "Pole" (pronounced *PO-lay*) is the Swahili word for "slowly."

"I'm revved up and ready to get back to Tanzania and represent AIR atop Africa's highest mountain and the highest freestanding mountain in the world!" Jolley said, referring to the *Climbing Kili for AIR* campaign that she recently launched with her coworker, Kenneth Rollins. "I want to make this climb meaningful and build awareness, and I immediately thought of AIR. I think it's going to be a wonderful way to help students here and to bring attention in other ways as well."

Jolley and Rollins have fundraising and media outreach efforts under way. They are planning a media blitz for May, which will be close to the anniversary of Jolley's first climb up Mount Kili and shortly before she comes to New Jersey for AIR's Second Annual Miki & Friends Walk & Run for AIR event, which will be held on May 18, 2013 in the East Picnic Area of Mercer County Park in West Windsor. This event is being sponsored by PetSmart and will continue to be held on the third Saturday in May in future years. This day holds spiritual significance for the Bakers: it is close to the anniversary of Kenny's death.

Jolley and Rollins will continue fundraising and awareness building efforts throughout the year, and the campaign will culminate with Jolley's second climb – and possibly Rollins' first climb – of Mount Kili in December 2013. "I am determined to reach the summit and place an AIR flag when I get there," Jolley said.

"I feel so close to Karen through our communication through Facebook. It's hard to believe that we haven't met in person yet! I can't wait to meet her at our event in May," Tricia Baker said. "We're a small organization that is completely volunteer-driven. Every bit of support we get both locally and far away is greatly needed and appreciated for our mission to educate students and help save their lives. Thanks to Karen, we look forward to establishing AIR Georgia in the near future. We also plan to start AIR North in Vermont through our connections at Norwich University."

"We've come a long way in a short amount of time, yet we have a long way to go to make a substantial impact on the unfortunate rate of suicide," added Kurt Baker. "We are fortunate to have a growing cadre of passionate supporters on our Board of Trustees and in our network of volunteers, and to be expanding our mission so quickly to other states and even another continent. The need for mental health education and suicide prevention is profound everywhere. We will continue to do what we can and the more supporters we have the more lives we can ultimately save."

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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 completed 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. In the first two years, they have presented to more than 10,000 students in middle and high schools and colleges in New Jersey and New York, and they have been invited to present at other schools in New Jersey, as well as Georgia, Vermont and Texas. AIR also includes an AIR Dogs: Paws for Minds™ program, through which displaced dogs with the ability to serve as Emotional Support Dogs, which are more than pets, are matched with individuals who have mental illnesses or developmental disabilities, thereby saving two lives with each match. For more information about AIR and its Walk & Run event, please visit [www.attitudesinreverse.org](http://www.attitudesinreverse.org).