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**Attitudes In Reverse® Honors Ricardo Almeida, Founder,
Ricardo Almeida Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Academy, as *Champion of Hope*
September Is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month**

PRINCETON, NJ, September 20, 2022 – “Exercise is proven to help people with depression and other mental health disorders. Martial arts go beyond the benefits of exercise. They also build confidence, camaraderie, structure and discipline,” according to Ricardo Almeida, Founder, Ricardo Almeida Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Academy, who will be honored by Attitudes In Reverse® (AIR®) as a *Champion of Hope* during AIR’s sixth annual Taste of Hope event on October 12, 2022 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Princeton Marriott at Forrestal, Princeton, New Jersey.

“Martial arts are a game changer for people with mental health difficulties. They’re also good for people with autism, attention deficit disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and people of all ages,” Almeida said.

“It’s an honor for us to partner with Ricardo and recognize him as a Champion of Hope. He contributes so much to youths’ mental health through jiu jitsu training. His goals and compassion for children align perfectly with AIR’s mission, and we are grateful for his support,” said Tricia Baker, CPDT-KA, and Kurt Baker, CFP®, Co-Founders of AIR. Since 2010, AIR has educated more than 150,000 students from elementary school through college about strengthening their mental health and, for the older students, recognizing warning signs of depression, the fact that asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness, and that mental health services are highly effective.

“I admire Tricia and Kurt for what they do. An initiative like AIR is ahead of its time. They experienced trauma and try to prevent it for others, to bring a sense of normality for people left behind from these tragic incidents,” Almeida said. “Suicide is much more widespread than we once thought. Kids won’t grow out of mental health struggles. Our mental health is not what we once thought. There is a lot more help needed than we once thought. People need to be prepared to spot them before something happens.”

“I’m honored to receive this award and I will help bring more awareness about mental health and suicide prevention. Suicide leaves a wake behind – family members get the world pulled from under their feet. I’ll help in any way I can,” Almeida said.

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Almeida will be honored along with Larry Bailin, Founder, President and CEO of Single Throw Marketing, *Champion of Hope*, and Erin Popolo, Community Student Advocate, *Partner in Hope*, during the 6th Annual Taste of Hope event on October 12, 2022.

AIR is grateful for the sponsors of this year's event: *AIR Sponsor* – Connell Company; *Faith Sponsor* – Structure Tone; *Dignity Sponsors* – CareOne, Pay Day/David Freid, Ray Catena, Sally Boys, Sharp Home Electronics Company of America; and *Love Sponsors* – Aetna Better Health of NJ; Hinkle, Prior & Fischer Attorneys at Law; J. Robert Bratman, Esq.; JAG ONE Physical Therapy; Silas Baker, Jr.; Stark & Stark Attorneys at Law; Szaferman Lakind Attorneys at Law; Lakeland Bank; The Milan Family Foundation, Inc.; and Vito and Marlene Sisti.

Participating restaurants and dessert, wine and spirit vendors are Antimo's Italian Kitchen, Applebee's, Carella's Chocolates, CATB Liquor Imports, Crown of India, De Lorenzo's Tomato Pies, Iron & Ivy at Princeton Marriott at Forrestal, Local Greek, McCaffrey's Food Market, Outback Steakhouse, P.F. Chang's, Public Wines, Beer & Spirits, Plush Vodka, Seasons 52, Senor Sangria, Sourland Mountain Spirits, Starbucks and Texas Roadhouse.

To register to attend the Taste of Hope event or make a donation, please visit www.toh.ngo.

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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 150,000 students in elementary, middle and high schools and colleges in New Jersey, New York, Vermont, Missouri, Texas and Arizona. AIR also offers Youth Mental Health First Aid instruction and includes the AIR Dogs: Paws for MindsSM program, bringing dogs into schools to help students de-stress and engage in the conversation about mental health. In addition, AIR trains and certifies Emotional Support Animals and offers a lunch-and-learn program for businesses. For more information about AIR, please visit www.air.ngo or call 609-945-3200.

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