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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hornets Players Partner with Louisiana Children's Museum to Encourage Kids to "Run, Read, Leap, Achieve!"

Entire team reads to kids to tip-off Read to Achieve Initiative

New Orleans, LA, October 19, 2009 – The New Orleans Hornets will join with the Louisiana Children's Museum to launch the team's *Read to Achieve* initiative for the 2009-10 season with the "Run, Read, Leap, Achieve!" literacy event on Tuesday, Oct. 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Museum. The entire Hornets team will be paired with a Hornets broadcaster or local sports reporter to read to 500 third graders from 12:15-12:45 p.m. during 13 simultaneous reading sessions.

"Encouraging kids to develop a love for reading and pursue education are two of the most important messages the Hornets organization can communicate to our local students," said Hornets Owner George Shinn. "We understand that we can use our players and staff members to motivate these students and have a profound impact on the educational choices they make for their future."

More than 500 third graders from the Recovery School District, Jefferson Parish and St. Bernard Parish have been invited to attend. They will spend the morning learning about the importance of literacy and education through different stations located inside the Museum and outside in block-party style on Julia St.

"This special event with the Hornets provides children with fun and creative ways to enhance their love of reading and books," said Julia Bland, Executive Director of the Louisiana Children's Museum. "The Museum is proud to partner with the Hornets who serve as great role models for students and encourage them to do their best in the classroom, the basketball court and in the community."

In addition to the Museum's exhibits, students will also enjoy creative writing sessions hosted by the Louisiana Department of Education. The New Orleans Public Library will distribute library cards and the Hornets Bookmobile, presented by Best Western, will hand out a free book to each student. The children will also be entertained with interactive games and appearances by Hugo and the Honeybees.

Media are encouraged to arrive at 11:00 a.m. to cover the kids engaged in sports and literacy activities as well as the reading time-outs that follow. In addition to the entire Hornets team, Hornets broadcasters Gil McGregor, Bob Licht, Sean Kelley, Gerry Vaillancourt and Joe Block will participate as well as Fletcher Mackel from WDSU, Michael Hill from WGNO, Scott Cody from WWL TV, Nancy Parker from WVUE and John DeShazier from the Times-Picayune.

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