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Action Outreach Partners with Operation Smile to Help Children in China

Team Running Gobi March Brings Smiles to Children with Facial Deformities

United Kingdom — Action Outreach, a registered U.K. charity that assists individuals in fundraising efforts and helps identify worthy causes in developing countries, is working with competitors in the Gobi March 2005, a seven-day, 250 kilometer footrace, to raise funds for Operation Smile, a private, not-for-profit, volunteer medical services organization that provides life-altering reconstructive facial surgery for children worldwide. From April 22-27, an international team of Operation Smile medical volunteers will operate on approximately 150 disfigured children in Xi'an, China, in the Shaanxi Province. This medical mission has been scheduled in conjunction with RacingThePlanet's Gobi March, taking place in China's Gobi Desert from April 24-30. Action Outreach, with a team of 18 competitors, has agreed to sponsor the Xi'an mission site for US\$150,000, in conjunction with Operation Smile's ongoing China programs. This mission marks the first time Operation Smile will treat children in the city of Xi'an, China.

Action Outreach's "Challenge Yourself for Charity" campaign will establish the Gobi March as a fundraising event for this and future Operation Smile China missions. This challenge will add inspiration to the athlete's test of endurance. Before the race, runners will be motivated by "before" video images of children at the Operation Smile Xi'an mission. At the conclusion of the race, the "after" surgery images of children will be presented to the team at the Gobi March Awards Banquet in Urumqi, China. If you would like to join efforts with the Action Outreach team and support Operation Smile, please make your donation in U.S. dollars, go to www.operationsmile.org/news/news/.

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Greg Baker of Virginia, an experienced marathon runner and 16-year employee of Nike, is a competitor on the Action Outreach team for the Gobi March. On April 22, prior to the race, Baker, representing the Action Outreach team, will attend Operation Smile's medical mission in Xi'an to visit with children being given free medical evaluations. Baker is familiar with Operation Smile, having been a patient of Dr. Bill Magee, Operation Smile's CEO and co-founder. Dr. Magee diagnosed Baker with Perry Romberg Syndrome, which caused atrophy on one side of his face and partial hearing loss. Even though Baker was not an Operation Smile patient, he has undergone numerous surgeries and understands the embarrassment and discomfort experienced by children suffering with deformities. Baker says, "Through numerous marathons, I have already raised over \$50,000 for Operation Smile. I simply want to use my passion and God-given ability to run in a positive way, to benefit others."

The Need for Operation Smile:

One in 500 children in the developing world is born with a facial deformity. It is estimated that each year over 35,000 children are born in China with cleft lip and cleft palate deformities, most of which are never treated. These children may have difficulty eating; ear disease and dental problems occur frequently, as do problems with proper speech development. For centuries, throughout much of the world, children born with facial deformities were sentenced to a life of shame, disfigurement, public humiliation and private pain. Since 1991, Operation Smile has provided surgery for more than 5,600 children in China. Operation Smile answers the call from thousands of children in more than 20 countries who still suffer needlessly.

About Action Outreach:

Action Outreach, founded by retired attorney Evelyn Fergusson, is a United Kingdom registered and incorporated charity. Its vision is the relief of sickness and poverty and the promotion of health and welfare in third world and developing countries. Action Outreach seeks to achieve this by supporting charities (selected by a board of Trustees) which fulfill this role. Action Outreach's mission is to direct its resources at harnessing athletic challenges to fundraise for its designated charities. For more information, visit www.actionoutreach.org.

Please see attached list of Action Outreach runners.

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Action Outreach Runners

- (1) Greg Baker, U.S.A.
- (2) Lucy Bond, United Kingdom
- (3) Matthew Chapman, Australia
- (4) Peter Clarke, United Kingdom
- (5) Catherine Cole, U.S.A
- (6) Douglas Fergusson, United Kingdom
- (7) St. John Flaherty, United Kingdom
- (8) Sean Ho, Hong Kong
- (9) Nathan Ide, Australia
- (10) Stuart Leckie, United Kingdom
- (11) Celina Lim, Singapore
- (12) Norman Lyle, United Kingdom
- (13) Ian Campbell Lyle, Ireland
- (14) Frank Marriott, United Kingdom
- (15) Angel Ng, Hong Kong
- (16) Gordon Shaw, United Kingdom/South Africa
- (17) Michael Shoaf, U.S.A
- (18) Bruce Walker, United Kingdom

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