

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Duval County School Superintendent is among “All Stars” playing for The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition

**JACKSONVILLE, Fla., July 8, 2014** – Some of the most influential leaders on the First Coast are joining the roster for the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition’s, **Rounds at the Grounds, “All Stars”** exhibition softball game. The signature fundraising event is scheduled for Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup> 2014, just before the Suns take on the Pensacola Blue Wahoos. The popular matchup, now in its fifth year, will challenge area medical professionals to take on popular community leaders from the First Coast. The competition will highlight the importance of getting the community to join together to reduce the area’s high infant mortality rate and improve the health of women, children and families in Northeast Florida.

This year’s theme **“All Stars”** also celebrates the great work of those who have supported the Coalition’s efforts. To date community leaders taking the field will be: Superintendent of Duval County Public Schools Dr. Nikolai P. Vitti and his wife Rachel, Morning Co-Host on 99.9 Gator Country Eden Kendall, former WNBA Commissioner and founder of Generation W Donna Orender, Celebrity Blogger Kerry Speckman, 2013 Duval County Teacher of the Year Apryl Shackelford, Gateway Community Services CEO Candy Hodgkins, Firehouse Subs CEO Don Fox, Jacksonville.com’s Matt Pittman and COO of Community in Schools Leon Baxton. Representing the medical profession to date: First Coast Oncology’s Dr. Scot Ackerman and former Director, Duval County Health Department, Dr. Robert Harmon.

“We are very excited to have so many community leaders and health care providers in Northeast Florida are supporting this event and the Coalition,” said Jennifer Gornto, Executive Director, Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition. “Infant mortality is considered a sentinel indicator of the health of a community. The money raised for this event will help to support the sustainability of key Coalition activities that improve the health of families living in Northeast Florida.” Sponsors for the Rounds at the Grounds, “All Stars,” exhibition softball game are Mayo Clinic, Wolfson Children’s Hospital, Nemours and Southern Oak Insurance.

The **2014 Rounds at the Grounds, “All Stars”** festivities are scheduled to begin at 4:45pm on Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup> 2014, at the Baseball Grounds of Jacksonville, followed by the Suns versus the Pensacola Blue Wahoos. Tickets are specially priced at \$10.50, the game will last approximately 1 hour and admission to the Jacksonville Suns game is included. For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Charlene Shirk, Event Media Coordinator at 904-860-2991 or [Charlene@charleneshirk.com](mailto:Charlene@charleneshirk.com).

**The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, Inc.**

The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, Inc. was organized in 1992 as part of a statewide network of community-based organizations to reduce Florida's high infant mortality and improve the lives of pregnant women and their families. The group is governed by a volunteer board, which allocates state funding and provides oversight to local agencies that deliver services to pregnant women and families of newborns. The Coalition covers Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties.

For more information about the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition please go to [nefhealthystart.org](http://nefhealthystart.org) or for more information about tickets to Rounds at the Grounds please contact Sara Rieger at 904.723.5422, ext. 124 or [srieger@nefhsc.org](mailto:srieger@nefhsc.org).

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