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*****For Immediate Release*****

Youth Run New Orleans Students To Compete in Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon
22 students from three parishes will complete 13.1-mile race

New Orleans, LA: Youth Run New Orleans, a project of the Young Leadership Council, is proud to announce that 25 students from across three parishes in Greater New Orleans will compete in this year's Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon on Sunday, March 4, 2012. The event marks the culmination of an intensive two-month guided training program in distance running and nutrition, geared toward helping students how to healthily train for and successfully complete a half marathon.

Youth Run New Orleans, founded in 2010 by former St. Bernard Parish teachers Andre Feigler and Alex Lebow, uses running as a medium to inspire and prepare students for success on the track, in the classroom, and in the community. Now in our second year, Youth Run New Orleans continues to grow, counting 88 student runners this year, all of whom will complete the Crescent City Classic on April 7. The organization now counts participants at Andrew Jackson Middle School, Arthur Ashe Charter School, Bunche Accelerated Academy, Chalmette High School, C.F. Rowley Alternative School, John Dibert Academy, Sci Academy, and West Jefferson High School. Each school group is led by faculty coaches who help students prepare for a calendar of road races through after-school practices, instruction, training runs, team-building exercises, and an emphasis on commitment, discipline, and fun. 2012 marks our inaugural participation in the Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon.

"We see the Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon as a high bar that these committed students have set for themselves, and a huge accomplishment that reflects the work our students and coaches do throughout the school year," said Project Leader Alex Lebow. "Training for and running in the race is an opportunity for students to set and achieve goals that many may not have thought possible just a year ago. More importantly, the process helps students build the character, commitment, wellness, self-esteem, and leadership skills that will allow them to become tomorrow's community leaders."

According to Running USA's "Inaugural Half-Marathon Report" (2010), only 3% of half-marathoners in the United States were under the age of 20. Twenty-two Youth Run NOLA

students will join these growing ranks with their participation in this year's race, with each individual student accompanied by a coach or volunteer running buddy. Cheering sections of Youth Run NOLA parents, friends, and supporters will urge them on at three locations along the course.

The race begins at Poydras and Camp streets in the CBD, travels down and back St. Charles Ave., and follows Esplanade Ave. up to the finish line on Roosevelt Mall in City Park. The starting gun goes off at 7 a.m. The event will be preceded by a Carb Load Dinner for participants and their families on the night of March 3, and will be followed by a post-event celebration for the entire Youth Run NOLA group at the Finish Line Festival. Youth Run NOLA coaches and supporters will also join the ING KiDS Rock New Orleans 1-mile run for younger students as volunteers on the afternoon of March 3.

"Thanks to YRNOLA, I'm becoming a better person and will be a positive influence in other peoples' lives," wrote one Chalmette High student and Rock 'n' Roll competitor in an essay about Youth Run New Orleans. "Most importantly, thanks to YRNOLA, I have a better heart."

Youth Run New Orleans invites media outlets to attend the race and post-event celebration on Saturday, March 4. Opportunities to interview Youth Run New Orleans student participants, parents, coaches, and staff will be provided, along with photo opportunities. If you are interested in covering this exciting event, please contact communications coordinator Matt Brennan at mbrennan@yrnola.org or (508) 982-2144.

Youth Run New Orleans is a project of the Young Leadership Council. The Young Leadership Council is a non-profit, non-partisan civic organization created to develop leadership through community projects. Through volunteer-created community projects, the YLC recruits and retains young professionals to New Orleans, creating a positive impact on the quality of life in the region. The oldest, independent YPO (young professionals' organization) in the country, the YLC has raised more than \$25 million to support community projects in and around the New Orleans area since 1986.

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