

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Partners In Peace Gets A Gold Medal! Jackie Joyner Kersee to Jump In As Keynote Speaker

PEORIA, IL – Due to a shifted schedule caused by the recent writers' strike, actress and author Robin Givens is unable to serve as the keynote speaker for the Partners in Peace Awards Luncheon hosted by The CENTER for PREVENTION of ABUSE at 12 noon on Tuesday, March 11, 2008, at the Peoria Civic Center.

In this Olympic year, it is fitting that Ms. Givens be replaced by a six-time Olympic Gold Medalist. Jackie Joyner-Kersee has agreed to serve as the keynote speaker for the luncheon. She will meet with local students prior to the luncheon and greet community leaders at a private reception the night before.

Ms. Kersee is considered one of the greatest athletes of all time. Sports Illustrated for Women voted Jackie Female Athlete of the 20th Century and ESPN named her one of the 50 Greatest Athletes. She received these honors by becoming the first woman to win back-to-back gold medals in the heptathlon; the first woman to score 7,000 points in that event; and the first American woman to win an Olympic gold medal in the long jump, all on her way to winning 6 Olympic Medals in four consecutive Olympic Games.

In her hometown of East St. Louis, Illinois, Jackie realized her vision in 2000 when she proudly opened the Jackie Joyner-Kersee Center, which provides services to thousands of families and youth in the metropolitan St. Louis area. The Center offers a variety of educational and recreational activities for youth and adults including: after-school tutoring, youth sports leagues, nutrition and health education, fitness and meals for seniors, as well as other important community-related programs. She has also authored two books: "A Woman's Place is Everywhere" and her autobiography, "A Kind of Grace."

The Partners in Peace event honors individuals and groups in the community that further the mission of The Center for Prevention of Abuse, to build a safe, peaceful community. The Partners in Peace Luncheon also recognizes volunteers of The Center for their dedication of time, talent, and energy.

Sponsors of the event include Ameren, CEFCU, WEEK-TV 25, Lite Rock 107, apace Inc., Aventine Renewable Energy, Inc., Caterpillar Inc., Central Illinois Business Publishers, Bonnie Schofield in memory of Chuck Schofield, Methodist Medical Center, Peoria Times-Observer, and Verizon Wireless.

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The Center for Prevention of Abuse is the only agency in the State of Illinois to provide combined services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault/abuse and elder abuse. Serving 15 new persons each day and more than 4,000 women, children and men affected by violence and another 15,000 students who are at risk each year, The Center works to achieve its vision of building a safe, peaceful community.

