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CHRIS 180 Shifts Annual Fundraiser to Virtual Gala Honoring COVID-19 Heroes

ATLANTA (August 10, 2020) In a season of cancelled events, virtual learning and more people in need than ever before, Atlanta based behavioral health nonprofit CHRIS 180 has shifted its largest fundraiser, *The CHRISal Ball* to a virtual event it hopes will raise significant donations and spread awareness of their close to 40 years of impact across the city. **The virtual gala will be held on Thursday, August 20 at 7:00 p.m. on CHRIS 180's YouTube and Facebook pages.**

Under the leadership of event co-chairs and members of CHRIS 180's Board of Directors, Julia Houston and Terrin McKay, the organization made the call to move the event to an online format, instead of pushing until later this fall, or postponing indefinitely. The reason behind the shift was connected to the COVID-19 pandemic. CHRIS 180 has stepped up as mental health first responders during the crisis, serving thousands each week with emergency relief services including food distributions in Atlanta Police Zones 1, 3 and 6 where many residents are suffering due to the loss of jobs and income during the public health crisis.

"We believe that as an organization, our mission calls on us to meet people where they are, and for us that meant leaning in to help meet basic needs as well as providing counseling and other services, said Kathy Colbenson, LMFT, President and CEO of CHRIS 180. In making the decision to hold our Ball in August, we knew funds were needed immediately to support the children, youth, adults and families who rely on CHRIS 180 to help them fill the gaps in this most difficult time."

With a call to action to raise funds for both emergency relief efforts and continued programming, CHRIS 180 themed this year's event, *Honoring our Heroes*, to shine a light on its staff, who have shown their dedication to helping clients build resilience and strengthen their mental health during this season. The theme is also a nod to the organizations corporate, foundation and individual donors who have given generously throughout the pandemic season. Current clients and staff members will share their perspectives on the organization's life-changing work during the event.

Sponsors of *The CHRISal Ball* include: Presenting Sponsors, Delta Air Lines and The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation along with Champion Sponsor Cox Enterprises. Protector Sponsors include: Equifax, Mazloom Charitable Fund, PNC, Publix Super Market Charities, Seyfarth Shaw LLP and Truist. Advocate Sponsors include: Accenture, Amerigroup, CIBC Private Wealth Management, Holder Construction, McKenney's, OneDigital, Legendary Events, Smith & Howard, United HealthCare, Wells Fargo, Kathy & Pete Colbenson, Araya & Amber Mesfin, Marybeth & Fred Leamer, Terrin & Rich McKay, Dr. Michael Yochelson & Kevin Clift along with 60+ Patron Sponsors.

Registration to The CHRISal Ball is free and can be secured at CHRISalBall.org through August 20. To follow the conversation on social media, use #CHRISalBall2020.

About CHRIS 180

Since 1981, CHRIS 180 has transformed more than 90,000 lives. CHRIS 180 saves, serves and protects traumatized children, adults, and families through solution-focused programming that empowers them to change the direction of their lives. This approach enables those we help to reach their happiness, health, and achieve success despite challenging circumstances. The name CHRIS 180 represents our core values: Creativity, Honesty, Respect, Integrity, and Safety. For more information, visit CHRIS180.org.