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PARA ANNOUNCES 29th SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM AT MCDONALD HUGHES CENTER

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. – For the 29th year, Tuscaloosa County Park & Recreation Authority in conjunction with the City of Tuscaloosa is sponsoring the Summer Food Program. The program provides a healthy lunch to children 18 and younger and people with disabilities, at the McDonald Hughes Community Center. The meal is served Monday-Friday at 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. on June 1-August 3. and is free of charge.

Many parents face challenges in providing healthy dining options during the summer months while they work and their children are not in school. The program aims to provide meals with a meat, two vegetables, fresh fruit and milk to fill the gap between school terms.

“It is important that children have the opportunity to receive a nutritional meal since that has become a focus of national, as well as local concern,” said Ronnie Stith, Director of Center Operations. “This non-discriminatory program may, for some, provide the only nutritional meal they have all day.”

“This program offers an opportunity for kids in the community to get a hot, balanced meal during the summer, five days a week,” John Rozier, Hughes Center manager said. “It saves money and benefits parents. They know that their children are eating a healthy meal once a day.”

Worry and fear over personal and family finances is an issue that Rozier said he and his staff has taken into account as they move closer to the 2009 launch of the Summer Food Program.

“With the state of the economy we are anticipating more people than we’ve had in a while,” he said. “We averaged 530 meals served per day in 2008 and are preparing for up to 800 a day this year. We are ready.”

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Live, Learn, Play! PARA. The Tuscaloosa County Park & Recreation Authority is a county wide non-profit agency funded by the city of Tuscaloosa, the city of Northport and Tuscaloosa County. PARA's mission is to provide safe, clean, and beautiful facilities, parks and open space, along with professionally managed leisure activities for all people and to enrich the quality of life, provide economic value, and encourage long-term community stability and growth. Through strong partnerships, we achieve exceptional services and foster an atmosphere of cooperation, trust, and innovation to better serve our community.