

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“TOUCHDOWN FOR SUCCESS” AT METLIFE STADIUM TO BLEND SERVICE DOGS, FASHION, AND SPORTS; RAISE AWARENESS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

COMMUNITY—The Calais Foundation is pleased to present Touchdown for Success, a daylong event at MetLife Stadium that raises awareness for children with a variety of special needs. The second annual event will be held during Autism Awareness Month on Thursday, April 18, 2013, 8:30am – 10:00pm and honor Janice Wolfe, founder of Merlin’s Kids, a national organization that rescues, rehabilitates, and trains shelter dogs to become service animals for children with autism and other special needs. Wyatt Ridgeback, Ms. Wolfe’s service dog will also receive an award of excellence.

Touchdown for Success will be hosted by Super Bowl Champion Roman Oben, who will meet and greet attendees during the event’s Gala Reception. Karma for a Cure will also unveil a new fashion forward tee and Pop-Up Store with a design inspired by children with special needs. 5% total sales of the tee will be donated to The Calais Foundation for family programming. Last year’s Touchdown for Success, was a huge hit spreading awareness throughout the tri-state area and generating over \$100,000 for children with special needs.

Touchdown for Success will feature several mini events and activations; see details below

- 8:30-10:30am | Breakfast of Champions a business networking event
- 11:30am-1:30pm | Student Kick Off Lunch
- 1:30 – 10:30pm | Karma for a Cure Pop-Up Shop
- 6:30 – 10:30pm | Touchdown for Success: Gala Reception & Stadium Tours

“About 1 in 6 children in the U.S. has a developmental disability, ranging from mild disabilities such as speech and language impairments to serious developmental disabilities, such as intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, and autism. The purpose of our Touchdown for Success campaign is to spread awareness about children with special needs and educate people on how we can empower this unique population so that they are able to go on to lead responsible, productive lives,” stated, James Routhier, President of The Calais Foundation. *“Raising a special needs child can take a tremendous financial toll on families even when insurance helps cover some of the costs. We are also looking to raise funds so that we can support the special needs community through grant as well as free and affordable education programs, research, and support services”.*

Touchdown for Success will kick off with the Breakfast of Champions’ Networking Breakfast. Geared towards engaging the business community, this networking event will run from 8:30 – 10:30am and allow attendees optimal opportunities to meet and greet as well as get a behind

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the scenes look at the famous stadium, soon to make history as the first open air venue in a cold weather city to host the Super Bowl. Breakfast of Champions will feature the mini talks, "Building an Industrial Strength Franchise in the Current Environment" by Michael K. Clark, CEO Clark Dodge & Company, Inc. and "From Stuck to Success" Tommy Hilcken, Life Success Consultant and Award Winning Motivational Speaker.

An emotional highlight of the day will be the *Special Needs Student Kickoff Luncheon* from 11:30am-1:30pm open to special needs students, their families, and invited guests. The Kick-Off Lunch will be a welcoming environment where special needs students can; learn about nutrition and fitness eat lunch in the stadium, go on a behind the scenes stadium tour, and complete fun drills with the GridIron G.A.N.G. featuring NFL Alumni Damian Gregory and Darien Barnes. VIP guests to be announced. Families interested in attending must register with The Calais Foundation at 973-884-2030 x 251.

“National Autism Month is a great time to bring people together and raise awareness for children with special needs. Anyone who knows me, knows that children and dogs hold a special place in my heart so I consider it an honor to be a part of The Calais Foundation’s Touchdown for Success campaign, stated Janice Wolfe, founder of Merlin’s Kids. “Pet therapy and service dogs are very beneficial to children with special needs because they provide comfort, safety, and companionship. The work that Calais is doing in special needs education and with pet therapy is exemplary and truly impacting families in a positive way.”

Touchdown for Success will also include fashion, with the unveiling of a new trendy tee designed by Karma for a Cure that will raise money for children with special needs. Throughout the day, Karma for a Cure will host a Pop-Up Shop located in The Commissioner’s Club at Met Life Stadium. The shop will feature designs from fashion line. **There will also be a fashion presentation during the Touchdown for Success: Gala Reception featuring models and children with special needs modeling the line and interacting with participants.**

The event will conclude with the *Touchdown for Success Gala Reception* hosted by Super Bowl Champion and TV Personality Roman Oben. The gala reception will begin at 6:00pm, photo arrivals will begin at 5:30pm. Attendees will enjoy networking, gourmet fare, and silent auction as they complete fun program activations and learn about the Calais Foundation’s mission, programs and services. The reception will honor Janice Wolfe, founder of Merlin’s Kids, a provider of free service dogs for children with autism and other special needs. Attendees can visit the Karma for a Cure Pop-Up Shop, tour the stadium, and meet and greet Miss New Jersey USA Libell Duran, and rising NJ Actor Jonathan Andrews during their time at the event. Hot silent auction items include; a behind the scenes experience at NBA Headquarters, membership at the PGA Center, Gucci Scarf, tickets to *Motown on Broadway* and much more. Additional VIP attendees to be announced.

All “Touchdown for Success” proceeds will benefit The Calais Foundation’s programs and services which offer exceptional opportunities for development and support for special needs children and their families. For sponsorship opportunities, tickets, and general information visit www.calaisfoundation.org or contact Jennifer Tedeschi at 973-884-2030 x 251 or

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About The Calais Foundation

Since its founding in 2006, The Calais Foundation, a New Jersey based 501c3, has raised over \$500,000 to benefit special needs children and their families. The Calais Foundation’s mission is to help children with serious learning and behavioral problems overcome their disabilities so they can lead responsible, productive lives. The Calais Foundation accomplishes its mission by providing grants, programs, and volunteer support to individual families and organizations that serve the special needs community. The Calais Foundation also helps to support the esteemed Calais School, a not for profit school for special needs children, grades PreK-12, located in Whippany, NJ. For more info visit www.calaisfoundation.org. Visit us on Facebook.



About Janice Wolfe

Janice Wolfe, the founder of Merlin’s Kids, and a cancer survivor, searched for a reason why she survived while so many others did not. As a result, she has dedicated herself to helping to provide and train service animals for special needs individuals. Janice is known as “The Lady” Dog Whisperer and “New Jersey’s Dog Whisperer” for her unique abilities with dogs with behavioral issues. Janice has rehabilitated over 25,000 dogs. She travels around the country with Wyatt, evaluating children and prospective dogs, rehabilitating and training service dogs, training families and school staff, family members, and often the children, then placing

the dogs in their final home. Janice is co-author of “There’s Hope! The Four Essential to a Stable Dog” and is currently authoring two book series with good friend Dr. Temple Grandin. Besides her work with Merlin’s KIDS, Janice helps private families with their dogs’ issues. She graduated Columbia University in 3 years with a BA in Economic Science and a BA in Biological Science with a concentration in Genetics and Behavior and minored in English, Spanish, Political Science, and Philosophy. For more information visit www.merlinskids.org.

About Wyatt Ridgeback

Wyatt is known as “The Evaluator” because he not only evaluates dogs for their stability and potential to become service dogs, but also evaluates children to see if they would be good candidates for service dogs. He has won several awards including the AKC’s ACE Award for Best Service Dog in 2010 for his work with special needs children. Wyatt is also Janice’s personal service dog and has detected a myriad of ailments in her and has helped save her life. On Facebook: Wyatt Ridgeback. Pictured above with Ower, Janice Wolfe.

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About Karma for a Cure

Fashion designer, Margaux Minutolo launches positive karma your way with her *Karma for a Cure* tee collection; high-quality, hand drawn graphic tees with a conscious for philanthropic men and women. 5% of the total retail sale goes to the charity unique to each specific tee. Already spotlighted on FOX Business, ABC News, News 12 NJ Karma for a Cure is already receiving fantastic reviews and being coveted by celebrities. Karma for a Cure has created shirts for the American Heart Association, Food Bank NYC, and The Calais Foundation to name a few. For more information and photos visit www.karmaforacure.com.

About Roman Oben

Roman Dissake Oben is a former professional American football player. He played college football at the University of Louisville before being drafted by the New York Giants in 1996. Oben spent 12 years as an offensive tackle in the National Football League playing for the Cleveland Browns, Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the San Diego Chargers. He was a starting offensive lineman on the Buccaneers Super Bowl XXXVII Championship team. Oben currently co-hosts New York Giants shows on MSG and CBS Local sports. www.romanoben.com