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For immediate release
June 15, 2010

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Homeless athletes to compete in San Diego International Triathlon

Six homeless men and women currently living at St. Vincent de Paul Village are in training to compete in the San Diego International Triathlon, which will take place June 27 at Spanish Landing Park to benefit the Village.

The Village will field two teams of three athletes each to compete in the relay event, which includes a 1K swim, 30K bike ride and 10K run. Village athletes include a 38-year-old man with diabetes, a 62-year-old Ukrainian woman who loves to swim, and 57-year-old man who has used this training to rehabilitate himself from an injury that had him walking with a cane.

Koz Enterprises, which has managed the sold-out event for 27 years, donated the two relay team entries – a contribution worth \$300. Breakaway Training, the official training program of the San Diego Triathlon Series, conducted a training session for the competitors and has offered to donate gear such as shirts, shoes and shorts to the participants.

“For people who have been on their own on the edges of society for a long time, it is very meaningful to be part of a team and to be recognized as mainstream athletes,” says Nick Coniaris, program manager for the Health and Wellness program at the Village.

The Health and Wellness program encourages homeless residents – many of whom have neglected their physical health for years – to recognize the benefits of exercise and nutrition. “Working out three times a week for the sake of staying in shape doesn’t appeal to everyone,” notes Coniaris. “Having the goal of training to complete this event, on the other hand – that has been their motivation.”

The Village’s competitors will be at the pre-event expo in the St. Vincent’s booth at Spanish Landing Park on Saturday, June 26, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and again at the Village Health and Wellness booth on event day June 27 from 5:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Stop by after the race for an inspiring interview with the athletes and coaches of the St. Vincent de Paul Village Triathlon team!

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Father Joe’s Villages® is a San Diego-based nonprofit that helps homeless neighbors in need regain their lives through a unique life-changing program that is nationally recognized and modeled for its effectiveness. Our groundbreaking approach to rehabilitation, known as the “University of the Human Spirit,” addresses the underlying causes of homelessness to break the cycle and help thousands of people become responsible, self-sufficient, productive citizens and pass their newfound independence and life skills on to their children and families. When we help one person, we help generations of families and communities.