

Baton Rouge Area Foundation



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For more information:

Mark Leonard
Next Level Agency
847-267-9660
mark@reachthenextlevel.com

**CHICAGO BULLS' TYRUS THOMAS ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF
FOUNDATION TO HELP AT-RISK YOUTH IN CHICAGO AND LOUISIANA
-- Thomas to host celebrity golf fundraiser in Baton Rouge on September 7**

Chicago and Baton Rouge, LA, July 26, 2007 – Tyrus Thomas, one of the NBA's most exciting young players, announced today the establishment of the Tyrus Thomas Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of children in the Chicagoland area as well as his home state of Louisiana.

The Foundation will fund educational and recreational programs that target at-risk children. The Tyrus Thomas Foundation will be administered by the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, which facilitated the distribution of more than \$30 million in grants in 2006 and raised \$44 million for Hurricane Katrina relief. Thomas is the first professional athlete to start a fund at the Foundation, which has more than 250 donors.

“I learned about basketball and life from great teachers of the game,” said Thomas who is entering his second year with the Chicago Bulls. “They taught me how to focus, how to work hard and how to treat your teammates. The foundation will support people who are passing on the same lessons to children in Louisiana and my second hometown of Chicago.”

Thomas plans to not only contribute regularly to the Foundation, but will also lead efforts in raising money to grow the fund. The first fundraiser will be the Tyrus Thomas Celebrity Golf Tournament, which will tee off Friday, September 7 at the Greystone Golf and Country Club in Denham Springs, La.

“The golf outing is a great way to raise money for a good cause while having fun at the same time,” Thomas said. “I know how fortunate I am to be in the position I'm in and it is very important to me to be able to give something back to the community.”

For more information about the Tyrus Thomas Foundation and the Tyrus Thomas Celebrity Golf Tournament, please visit www.tyrusthomas24.com.

About Tyrus Thomas

After an explosive freshman season at Louisiana State University, Thomas entered the 2006 NBA Draft and was selected fourth overall by the Portland Trail Blazers. Thomas was then traded along with forward Viktor Khryapa to the Chicago Bulls for forward-center LaMarcus Aldridge. In his first season with the Bulls, Thomas averaged 5.2 points and four rebounds per contest and was among the top shot blockers in the league while averaging just 13 minutes per game. Thomas also was named to the 2007 NBA All-Rookie 2nd team and participated in the Sprite Slam Dunk Contest during the All-Star Weekend in Las Vegas, NV.

About the Baton Rouge Area Foundation

The Baton Rouge Area Foundation serves two essential functions in the capital region of Louisiana. The Foundation connects philanthropists with capable nonprofits to make sure the needs of our communities are met. For instance, BRAF donors support the Shaw Center for the Arts and buy eyeglasses for needy children. The Foundation, with \$500 million in assets, also invests in and manages pivotal projects to improve the region. Among them is Plan Baton Rouge, a revitalization initiative for downtown that is also working to revive Old South Baton Rouge, the area where Thomas grew up. For more information about BRAF, please contact Mukul Verma at mverma@braf.org or visit braf.org.

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