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Media Contact:

Korena Cline
Epic PR Group
(703) 299-3404
korena@epicprgroup.com

HSC Foundation Awards First Youth Transitions Fellowship

WASHINGTON, D.C.—June 20, 2011— The HSC Foundation (HSCF), in conjunction with the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) announce the selection of the first 2011 Youth Transitions Fellow. Awarded to Leah Katz-Hernandez, the Fellow will lead an effort to enhance internship opportunities for individuals with disabilities, working closely with the Greater Washington Internship Coalition, the George Mason LIFE program and the Congressional Internship Program for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities.

"I am honored to have been selected for the Youth Transitions Fellowship and lead an initiative to not only increase the number of internships available for students with disabilities but also raise awareness that they exist," said Leah Katz-Hernandez. "Internships are invaluable for everyone, I've seen that firsthand. My experience in DC will put me one step closer to law school and a career in disability advocacy for youth."

Working in conjunction with George Mason's LIFE Program and the Committee on House Administration, U.S. Representative Gregg Harper (R-Miss) created the Congressional Internship Program in 2010 to give students with intellectual disabilities an opportunity to gain Congressional experience. As part of her fellowship, Katz-Hernandez will help administer Harper's program and work with the Committee to identify additional opportunities for youth with disabilities on Capitol Hill. She will also support the Greater Washington Internship Coalition to strengthen their programs - including branding initiatives and development of marketing materials.

As part of the Fellowship, Katz-Hernandez will also support the establishment of a Youth Training Collaborative, a network of organizations that will support one another and collectively develop a year-long training program to assist individuals with disabilities as they transition to the world of work. The Youth Training Collaborative will work closely with The HSC Foundation's National Youth Transitions Center (NYTC), a facility to open in October of 2011 that will offer programs and services to help young people and veterans with disabilities build paths to independence.

A native of Montgomery Village, MD and a graduate of the Maryland School for the Deaf, Katz-Hernandez is the executive director of Deaf Youth USA, a non-profit representing young deaf Americans aged 18 – 30 years old.

The Youth Transitions Fellowship is made possible by a grant from The HSC Foundation.

To schedule an interview with Katz-Hernandez or The HSC Foundation, please contact Korenna Cline by phone at 703-299-3404 or by email at Korena@epicprgroup.com

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About HSC Foundation

The HSC Foundation (HSCF) is dedicated to improving access to services for individuals who face social and health care barriers due to disability and chronic illness. It puts a particular emphasis on youth, especially those who are transitioning to adulthood. Health Services for Children with Special Needs, Inc., The HSC Pediatric Center, HSC Home Care, LLC and Special Needs Consulting Services are subsidiary organizations of the Foundation. To learn more about The HSC Foundation, visit <http://www.hscfoundation.org>.