

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**U.S. HEALTH CLUB MEMBERS PROCLAIM – “I LOST IT AT THE CLUB!”  
AND LOSE 45 TONS OF EXCESS WEIGHT**

BOSTON –April 23, 2008 - *I Lost It at the Club!*, a fitness industry weight loss and healthy living initiative coordinated by the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) and sponsored by Michael Foods' AllWhites®, helped a total of 25,840 participating health club members lose 28,101 inches and more than 45 tons (90,068 pounds) of excess weight. This year's fourth annual *I Lost It at the Club!*, which ran for eight weeks from January 7 to March 3, is one of several initiatives within the health club industry to help people become more physically active and live more healthful lives.

“We congratulate all participants in this year's program who acted on their decision to start off the new year right by making lifestyle changes for healthier living,” said Joe Moore, IHRSA's President and CEO.

“We live in a time when the demands of daily life can cause us to become physically inactive, putting us at greater risk for developing serious chronic diseases. We hope that *I Lost It at the Club!* has provided club members with the motivation and support they need to commit to regular physical activity and healthier lifestyle choices.”

IHRSA is pleased to recognize the following 2008 club winners in seven different categories:

- **Universal Athletic Club, Lancaster, Pennsylvania** (Greatest Amount of Total Weight Loss)
- **Anytime Fitness, Grand Island, New York** (Greatest Average Weight Lost Per Participating Member)
- **Discover Fitness Center, New Castle, Delaware** (Greatest Percentage of Members Participating)
- **Gold's Gym, Bloomington, Illinois** (Greatest Number of Members Participating)
- **Wave Health & Fitness, Boston, Massachusetts** (Greatest Average Number of Inches Lost Per Participating Member)
- **The Works Family Health & Fitness, Somersworth, New Hampshire** (Greatest Total Number of Inches Lost)
- **Snap Fitness 24-7, San Diego, California** (Wild Card for All-Around Great Effort)

“We're proud that such a large number of our members were motivated to exercise regularly and work hard to get results,” said Jill Grant, Director of Fitness and Personal Training, Universal Athletic Club. “Club members and club staff worked really hard together toward the same goal, and we saw great results. We're thrilled for all our club members who are so dedicated to improving their health and fitness.”

Participating health clubs were encouraged to use *I Lost It at the Club!* to hold special educational seminars, introduce new programs, and energize existing programs. Participating clubs also were encouraged to use the program to foster a sense of community in the club, bringing members together in a common program toward a common goal.

“I joined *I Lost It at the Club!* for the motivation,” said Megan Nelson, winner of Universal Athletic

Club's Age 25 to 30 Group Category. "I needed to lose weight after having my second baby. The program worked for me because of the accountability—knowing that I would be weighing in once a week. I did cardio four to five times a week and lifted one to two times a week. I also ate lots of veggies. This combination helped me lose my goal of 25 pounds AND stay healthy all winter. *I Lost It at the Club!* really motivated me!"

Participants in the 2008 *I Lost It at the Club!* program were weighed, received weight loss goals for the eight-week period, and were given an activity card suggesting variations for their workouts and weight loss tracking sheets. Many clubs offered personal trainers, nutritional counseling, weekly motivational meetings, and other health-related classes. AllWhites® provided complimentary recipe booklets and coupons to participating clubs.

The support and sense of community that programs like *I Lost It at the Club!* offer come at a time when many Americans are struggling against obesity, inactivity, and subsequent chronic disease. Many need help in the battle. In fact, according to a survey commissioned by IHRSA, although the vast majority of Americans (99 percent) believe that exercise helps preserve good health, most feel they have to battle current culture to exercise regularly. Four out of five Americans agree that "The current culture in America, including the pressures of work, family and financial demands, makes it hard for people to exercise regularly and maintain healthy lifestyles."

### **Other IHRSA-Organized Consumer Health Initiatives**

As part of the annual *Get Active America!* program started five years ago, a wide variety of health clubs nationwide offer health-focused programs each May and open their doors for free for several days. The goal is to make it easier for Americans to exercise and to help them build regular exercise into their daily routines. *Get Active America! 2008* is sponsored by Michael Foods' AllWhites® and Advil®.

IHRSA supports health promotion legislation to help encourage more active lifestyles, such as the Personal Health Investment Today (PHIT) Bill (H.R. 245), which takes a giant step toward a healthier America. This legislation would allow people to pay for exercise and physical fitness programs, certain exercise equipment, and children's sports league fees with pre-tax dollars through their Flexible Spending Account (FSA), Medical Savings Account (MSA), or Health Savings Account (HSA). That means Americans could save on their fitness-related costs because they wouldn't be paid for with taxable income.

IHRSA also supports the Workforce Health Improvement Program (WHIP) Act (H.R.1748, S.1038). The WHIP Act seeks to combat chronic disease and obesity caused by inactivity by balancing current law and allowing for off-site fitness center memberships as a tax-free benefit for employees. Current law allows employees to use on-site fitness facilities free of any tax implications, but when a business needs to outsource this health benefit, employees who receive off-site fitness center subsidies are required to pay income tax on the benefits. And their employers bear the associated administrative costs of complying with IRS rules. The WHIP Act eliminates this tax on off-site fitness center subsidies, making it easier for all employers to offer important exercise incentives for their workers.

### **About IHRSA**

IHRSA is a not-for-profit trade association representing health and fitness facilities, gyms, spas, sports clubs, and suppliers worldwide. IHRSA is committed to taking a leadership role in advancing physical activity, which is critical to America's health and the battle against obesity and disease. IHRSA supports effective national initiatives to promote more active lifestyles for all Americans and is working to pass laws that will help affect societal changes toward a more fit America.

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*For more information, visit [www.IHRSA.org](http://www.IHRSA.org). For a listing of health clubs with programs for seniors, families, and people with special health concerns, contact IHRSA at [healthprograms@ihrsa.org](mailto:healthprograms@ihrsa.org).*