FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FIT FUN FEST TO PROMOTE FITNESS AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES WITH DEL VALLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

The Junior League of Austin’s FIT-Food In Tummies program to sponsor the event on February 25, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

AUSTIN – All Del Valle ISD (DVISD) elementary students, teachers and families are encouraged to attend the new FIT Fun Fest. This event celebrates students' journeys to healthy, happy lifestyles. DVISD elementary students will receive a medal for completing a one-lap fun run around the track. In addition to the fun run and medal ceremony, the event will feature face painting, games, and a variety of booths offering health services information.

FIT Fun Fest is sponsored by FIT-Food In Tummies, which is a project of The Junior League of Austin (JLA). In collaboration with Del Valle ISD, the FIT program provides easy-to-prepare weekend meals for approximately 1,400 Baty and Hillcrest elementary students every Friday for 34 weeks during the regular school year.

"It is never acceptable for a child to go hungry and, sadly, it's a reality in Austin," said The Junior League of Austin FIT Chair Elissa Pate. “Too many students experience food insecurity and do not get enough to eat over the weekend. FIT exists to fill the gap when school meals aren't available.”

Nearly 90 percent of students in the Del Valle ISD are considered economically disadvantaged and rely on school meals served as a part of the National School Lunch Program. Children who go hungry over the weekend have higher rates of absenteeism, difficulty concentrating, and negatively impacted classroom behavior. FIT is tackling these problems head on.

“Studies show that when a child doesn’t have enough food over the weekend it takes until Wednesday to recover, with the cycle starting all over again on Friday. FIT is making a real, tangible difference in the lives of these children by ensuring that they have food to eat over the weekend,” said The Junior League of Austin President Sarah Valenzuela. “FIT is one of our most impactful programs, and we are delighted to see it expand to encourage exercise and good health in such a fun way.”

Fiesta grocery store and GoGo Squeeze will also co-sponsor the FIT Fun Fest event. Fiesta employees will be in attendance to hand out beverages and fruit after the fun run.

More than 80 JLA members will coordinate and staff the event, which will be held on February 25, 2017 at Veterans Memorial Stadium. The gates will open at 8:30 a.m. and the activities will kick off at 9:00 a.m.

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**The Junior League of Austin**
The Junior League of Austin is an organization of more than 2,500 women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. On an annual basis, The Junior League of Austin contributes over $800,000 to the Austin community and its members provide approximately 150,000 hours of volunteer service. For more information about The Junior League of Austin, call 512-467-8982 or visit www.jlaustin.org.

**FIT – Food In Tummies – Feeding Minds...Growing Bodies**
The Food In Tummies (FIT) Program is a signature project of The Junior League of Austin (JLA) designed to provide weekend nourishment to children in economically disadvantaged situations. FIT benefits the entire student population of two schools in the Del Valle Independent School District, which currently reports that more than 88 percent of students are considered economically disadvantaged. Every week for 34 weeks of the school year, the FIT program provides more than 1,400 students with backpacks full of healthy food along with bilingual recipe cards and nutrition tips. By feeding an entire student population that is currently experiencing food insecurity, school administrators cite the FIT program as a key contributor to improved school attendance numbers, better focus during classes, improved student health and other benefits.

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