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For Immediate Release

FORMER GOV. MIKE HUCKABEE TALKS ABOUT HEALTHY LIVING AT MORRISTOWN MEMORIAL'S ANNUAL WELLNESS LECTURE

MORRISTOWN, NJ NOVEMBER 7, 2007 – Mike Huckabee, author and politician, told a crowd of about 300 people how he changed his eating habits and lifestyle for the healthier, thwarted obesity and learned how to live with diabetes at Morristown Memorial Hospital's 15th Annual Wellness Lecture on November 1.

Huckabee, former Governor of Arkansas and a candidate in the 2008 presidential election, spoke at the hospital in an effort to promote his fourth book, "Quit Digging Your Grave With a Knife and Fork," which promotes living a healthy lifestyle. Huckabee signed copies of the book for members of the audience after the lecture. The book is crafted around Huckabee's own struggle to change his diet and lifestyle. In 2003, Huckabee found himself at a crossroads when numbness in his arm led to a diagnosis of Type II diabetes by his physician.

"He said if you don't change your lifestyle, you're entering the last decade of your life," Huckabee told the audience. "As he described this last decade, I decided, we need a different exit strategy."

Dr. Robert Melfi, medical director of the Adult Diabetes Center at Morristown Memorial Hospital, who introduced Huckabee at the event, said that in addition to an estimated \$92 billion spent on the treatment of diabetes and its complications in 2002, even more is lost in productivity from those who are dealing with the disease. Nearly 21 million Americans have diabetes, according to the American Diabetes Association.

"We can save a lot of lives, a lot of health and a lot of dollars through lifestyle change," Melfi said.

Huckabee, born in Hope, Ark., said that his poor diet was due to growing up in the Deep South, where fried foods have been a cultural mainstay, though fewer people are doing the physical exertion they once did in order to burn off those calories. Huckabee said he needed to "detoxify" his body of fried, fatty foods and learn to appreciate nutritious meals.

However, Huckabee said the greatest change came from within, when he learned not to focus solely on weight loss, to value nutrition and exercise equally, and to make his health a priority, even in light of the demanding schedule and constant travel that accompanies a presidential campaign.

"People ask me, 'how do you find the time to exercise?,'" Huckabee said. "I didn't find it. I made time."

Since his diagnosis, Huckabee, now 51, has lost 110 pounds, and has completed the 2005 and 2006 Little Rock Marathon, the Marine Corps Marathon and the ING New York City Marathon. As governor, he supported several health

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T H E P A S S I O N T O L E A D

initiatives, and created the Healthy Arkansas initiative, which encourages Arkansans to stop smoking, exercise more and eat healthier. As chairman of the National Governor's Association, Huckabee promoted the Healthy America Initiative, based on the Healthy Arkansas model.

The 15th Annual Wellness Lecture was presented by the Morristown Memorial Health Foundation and Community Health Department.

About Morristown Memorial Hospital

Part of Atlantic Health, atlanticealth.org, Morristown Memorial is a non-profit 629-licensed-bed hospital in Morristown, NJ. Morristown Memorial's specialties include cardiology and cardiac surgery, adult and pediatric oncology, critical and emergency care and inpatient rehabilitation and neonatal intensive care services. Morristown Memorial is also a Level II Regional Trauma Center and a Level III Regional Perinatal Center. Home to the largest cardiac surgery center in the state, Morristown's other services include the Goryeb Children's Hospital, Carol G. Simon Cancer Center, and Atlantic Rehabilitation Institute. In 2008, Atlantic Health will complete the new Gagnon Heart Hospital, a 250,000 square-foot facility that will consolidate all cardiovascular services at Morristown Memorial Hospital. Morristown Memorial is designated as a Magnet Hospital for Excellence in Nursing Service, the highest level of recognition by American Nurses Credentialing Center available to facilities that provide acute care services.

Atlantic Health also includes Overlook Hospital in Summit. Atlantic Health is the primary academic and clinical affiliate in New Jersey of Mount Sinai School of Medicine and The Mount Sinai Hospital. The hospital is accredited by The Joint Commission.

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