

\$3 Million Gift to Levine Children's Hospital Honors Ricky Hendrick

Carolinas Healthcare System has announced the commitment of \$3 million from the Rick and Linda Hendrick family to benefit Levine Children's Hospital.

In recognition of the gift, Levine Children's Hospital will dedicate its Pediatric Intensive Care Centers in honor of the Hendricks; late son and youngest child, Ricky Hendrick.

Encompassing the sixth floor of the new hospital, the Ricky Hendrick Centers for Intensive Care will house the facility's Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and the region's first Pediatric Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit. The Centers will feature a five-room sleep inn for parents, two private family waiting areas, a large open waiting space and a state-of-the-art business lounge.

"Our family is proud to make this pledge in Ricky's name," said Linda Hendrick, Ricky's mother. "He was a young man who would run, not walk, to wherever he was going. This hospital will make certain that others have the same opportunity."

Lauded by planners as the hospital's "heart and soul," the Centers will treat the most critically ill and injured children from across the region. Upon completion in summer 2007, the 234-bed facility will be the third-largest of its kind in the southeastern United States and the largest between Washington, D.C., and Atlanta.

"Our son placed a great importance on doing one's part to help others," said Ricky's father, Rick Hendrick, chairman of Hendrick Automotive Group and Hendrick Motorsports. "He had a passion for making a difference in people's lives, which is exactly what Levine Children's Hospital will do for families of this region."

Currently under construction on the campus of Carolinas Medical Center, Levine Children's Hospital will have the capacity to provide daily treatment to hundreds of patients from all walks of life. Its forward-thinking design will foster a warm and loving environment that is also state of the art.

"My brother had a passion for traveling new paths and trying new things," said Ricky's sister, Lynn Carlson. "Love was always a touchstone in his life and he came back to it continuously. Ricky loved children and I know he would be honored to be part of this wonderful hospital."

Born

and raised in Charlotte, Ricky Hendrick attended Charlotte Country Day School and, like his father, developed a love of motor sports at an early age. In the late 1990's, he began driving competitively in NASCAR Late Model and USAR ProCup events throughout the Southeast and soon transitioned into the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series.

At age 21,

Hendrick went to Victory Lane at Kansas Speedway in July of his 2001 rookie season to become, at the time, the youngest winner in Truck Series history. He later moved to the NASCAR Busch Series, but chose to retire from driving after suffering a serious shoulder injury at Las Vegas Motor Speedway in 2002.

Immediately following his racing career, Hendrick founded a local motorcycle dealership – Ricky Hendrick Performance – and joined his father, Rick, and grandfather, Papa Joe, by assuming an ownership role with Hendrick Motorsports. Ricky Hendrick remains the youngest championship-winning car owner in NASCAR history after his handpicked successor, driver Brian Vickers, claimed the Busch Series title in 2003.

A tragic Oct. 24, 2004 aircraft accident cut short Ricky Hendrick's life at age 24. The Hendrick family continues to keep his memory alive by supporting causes that were important to him – such as the Hendrick Marrow Program and the Hendrick Foundation for Children – and by following his daily affirmation; “Life is short. Play hard. Put me in, coach.”

“We are grateful for this generous gift from the Hendrick family,” said Michael C. Tarwater, president and CEO of Carolinas HealthCare System. “Ricky's passion for helping others, his gentle spirit and his emphasis on family will live on in our children's facility. Thanks to the support of the Hendrick family, not only will children receive state-of-the-art care, but they will ‘play hard’ – just like Ricky.”