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NEWS RELEASE

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FIONA RENDON: BRAVING DIABETES *Miracle Child Attending "Dancing For A Miracle"*

OKLAHOMA CITY (July 12, 2010) – Dancing the night away and mingling with local celebrities is most every 11-year-old girl's dream, but Fiona Rendon is not just any 11-year-old.

Fiona is a Children's Miracle Network Miracle Child, braving Type 1 diabetes and chronic bronchitis. She will attend the Dancing For A Miracle gala July 24 at The Skirvin Hilton Hotel benefitting Children's Hospital Foundation.

Fiona came to The Children's Hospital at OU Medical Center in 2006, after an emergency room visit resulted in a diagnosis of Type 1 diabetes. Fiona's condition, however, requires much more than the average diabetes regimen of giving shots and checking blood sugar. After months of struggling to control Fiona's diabetes and undergoing tests to uncover the source of her complications, Dr. Kenneth Copeland, a Children's Hospital Foundation supported physician, and the diabetes team diagnosed her with Celiac Disease, an auto-immune response in her digestive system that interferes with her insulin treatments.

"In the beginning, my blood sugar numbers were all over the place," said Fiona. "Dr. Copeland and everyone have been really great. They've helped me understand what I am going through."

With this diagnosis came changes to the Rendon family's food regiment in an effort to finally stabilize Fiona's diabetes. The family adopted a gluten-free diet, free of all wheat, rye and barley. Foods kids love like chicken nuggets, pizza and even birthday cake were now off-limits.

"We all adopted a gluten-free diet at home that first year to help support Fiona, and it was a huge adjustment for us all," Fiona's mother Anne said. "The hardest adjustment since her diagnosis has been in the social situations. In the lower grades, it seems that every week is another pizza party or birthday with cupcakes or doughnuts. I know she sometimes feels like an outsider, something none of us want our children to go through."

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Despite Fiona's new diet, her diabetes continues to bring challenges and complications. She also suffers from chronic bronchitis, an unusual ailment for young children. To this day, Fiona undergoes testing to discover the cause for her bronchitis and her unique diabetes situation, but she refuses to let her condition rule her life. She stays active with softball, swimming and gymnastics. She also loves to read.

"Having diabetes makes everything harder because I can't do everything like other kids can," said Fiona. "I have to check my blood sugar and take my pump off before I can just jump in the pool, and I can't eat whatever I want like other kids can."

From day-to-day treatment to hospital visits and medical tests, Fiona handles her situation with maturity beyond her years. Her parents credit the positive environment at The Children's Hospital for facilitating her resilient attitude.

"We are blessed to be under the care of Dr. Copeland and his great staff," Anne said. "They were a tremendous support for us and a source of positive energy which Fiona sometimes needs after a span of tough social situations or illnesses."

Dancing For A Miracle will raise funds to benefit Children's Miracle Network. Funds raised through CMN help CHF establish itself as a guardian of children's health by raising money to transform the health of Oklahoma's children. All funds raised through CHF will stay in Oklahoma so children will have access to exceptional pediatric specialists without having to leave the State and enable more research for cures of children's diseases just like Fiona's diabetes.

"We certainly appreciate the invitation to be part of another great Children's Miracle Network event to support the care of children in our community," said Anne. "We hope the public will come out and support Dancing For A Miracle."

For more information about Dancing For A Miracle, visit www.okchf.org.

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ABOUT US: Children's Hospital Foundation is a nonprofit 501c(3) organization in Oklahoma founded in 1983. Children's Hospital Foundation, through its volunteer board and vast community support, has funded pediatric research, education and clinical care programs to improve the care of Oklahoma's most critically ill and injured children. For more information, contact Executive Director, Kathy McCracken at 405.650-1718 or visit our website: www.okchf.org.