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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

100 Million Reasons for Stem Cell Research. Meet One, Cody Unser, Appearing on the CBS 'Early Show', 7:40am, Monday, August 1st, 2005.

Cody Unser is scheduled to appear on the CBS morning program the 'Early Show' this Monday. The segment, filmed in Cody's hometown of Albuquerque, NM, is a look at Cody's day-to-day routine—with a focus on her political advocacy of Stem Cell research.

On Feb. 5th 1999, Cody then 12, was practicing sixth-grade basketball at her Albuquerque, NM school when she began feeling excessively tired, developed a severe headache, and tingling in her legs. She was rushed to the emergency room, where she was evaluated, and released.

The next morning Cody couldn't move from her chest down.

Tests revealed a rare and serious disease called transverse myelitis, an inflammation of the spinal cord caused by an attack of the body's immune system.

"When doctors told me I would never walk again, I could have simply given up hope, but I didn't" Cody said.

Instead Cody, who hails from the famous Unser racing clan, used her name recognition, racing contacts, and family support to form the Cody Unser First Step Foundation (CUFSF). CUFSF's mission is to raise awareness and funds for research to combat the disease, and to help other paralysis victims.

Cody added, "Today, I am more hopeful than ever knowing I am one step closer to my dream of walking again."

Cody's mother, Shelley Unser, who heads the foundation, works tirelessly supporting her daughter's cause.

"She's just trying to redefine normal," Shelley said. "She actually thinks normal should be taken out of the dictionary, because she doesn't think it's fair. Mentally, there's nothing she can't do. Physically, she needs some assistance."

Physically though, Cody has been making great strides.

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Before developing transverse myelitis, Cody saw her mother and older brother, Al Unser III become certified as scuba divers. She planned to do the same when she was old enough.

Two summers ago Cody and CUFSF hosted the inaugural Cody's Great Scuba Adventure (CGSA).

"It's like a whole other world" Cody said. "It's total freedom. Just breathing underwater is great. When you're down there and you're paralyzed-- you forget that you are."

When she realized how much she enjoyed scuba diving, she wanted others to experience it as well.

Though paralyzed from the chest down, she has now been certified, and in doing so, she has opened up a 'whole other world' for people with disabilities by making instructors knowledgeable in dealing with students like her.

CGSA was a watershed event for both the mobility-challenged and scuba diving communities. Through the efforts of hundreds of individuals it became a reality. A reality that began with a simple dream and goal, the notion that a mobility-challenged teenage girl could learn and become certified, to open water scuba dive, with her able-bodied and certified big brother.

CGSA2 is scheduled for later this summer/fall, located in the Grand Bahama Islands.

In May, Cody celebrated her high school graduation, and this fall plans to attend University of the Redlands in Southern California.

Later that month, at the invitation of ResearchAmerica! and the Coalition for the Advancement of Medical Research (CAMR), Cody spoke at the press conference that preceded the milestone vote in the U.S. House of Representatives on H.R 810—the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005.

Three weeks ago, Cody flew to Baltimore for a week of rehabilitation. She visited Johns-Hopkins Transverse Myelopathy Center, to work with her physician Dr. Doug Kerr, and, in conjunction, received experimental treatment at the adjacent Kennedy-Krieger Institute.

This weekend Cody is in San Jose, CA to cheer on her older brother, second-year Toyota Atlantic series and Brooks Racing Associates driver Al Unser III (#10 BOSPOker.net/PKV Racing)—as he competes in the San Jose Grand Prix.

Cody and Al recently applied her foundation's decal on his race car.

When asked of the significance of applying the decal, Al said, "It's symbolic. It's easy to look at her situation and draw a bit of inspiration. It means picking up and carrying on with life no matter what hand you're dealt. And perhaps it's for good luck too." Cody added: "I think it's quite cool to combine hope and horsepower simply with a sticker."

And, on Monday, Cody appears in a feature segment on the CBS morning program, the 'Early Show'.

"I am really pleased that the 'Early Show' found our cause interesting," Cody said. "It was a great experience—I especially want to thank Lisa Semel, her crew, and CBS News. Anytime we can 'spread the news' on expanding Stem Cell research—well, I just can't thank them enough."

For more information or to support Cody's foundation or events please contact:

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Visit the Cody Unser First Step Foundation at www.codysfirststep.org