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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **How to Stop a Speeding Bullet -how one local organization is targeting youth gun violence-**

*Milwaukee, WI - Feb. 22, 2013* - One in five gun crimes involve juvenile offenders. So when a juvenile in Milwaukee is charged with possession of a firearm, what happens? If the court orders intervention, they often end up on the doorstep of Running Rebels - a local nonprofit that annually provides more than 2,500 at-risk youth with positive alternatives to violence, gangs and substance abuse.

For over a decade, Running Rebels has partnered with the Juvenile Court system to help youth as young as 12-years-old found with a firearm (or considered a Serious Chronic Offender) through an intensive monitoring program.

At a press conference, which will take place Tuesday February 26<sup>th</sup> at 9am, Running Rebels will announce the total tax dollars saved because the Running Rebels programs were favored over incarceration. On the same day of the announcement, the organization will kick off a provocative new ad campaign on gun violence prevention, created by SERVE, to help mobilize financial support for the organization's intervention tactics.

"The reality is that 100% of the youth in the court-ordered program will return to the community." says Victor Barnett, founder of Running Rebels, "That is why Running Rebels focuses on the individual - not just the gun. In addition to intensive monitoring, kids find life-long mentors, a safe place to go after school, and positive ways to express themselves through sports or music. They often become a Rebel for life."

#### More Facts about Youth and Gun Violence

- According to the Office of Justice, one in five gun crimes involve juvenile offenders (2005).
- **Violent crime** peaks during the after school hours (3:00-7:00 p.m.). Juveniles are more likely to be both offenders *and* victims of violent crime during this time frame.
- Half of all juveniles murdered in 2010 were killed with a firearm (likewise, this trend is also true for the time period between 1980 and 2010).
- Studies show that for youth, proven intervention programs pay for themselves many times over.

#### Interview Opportunities

- Victor Barnett, Founder, Running Rebels
- Dvonte Hill- Davonte was shot in a drive-by when he as only 5 years old and has experience violence his entire life. At age 11, his cousin was killed in a shooting and at 16 he was charged with possession of a deadly weapon. After five years with Running Rebels, he's doing something to change the world.
- Judge Donald, Presiding Judge at Children's Court