



Inspire the World to Fitness®

**Contact:**

Bernhard Schroeder  
IDEA Health & Fitness Association  
858.535.8979, ext.275  
[schroederb@ideafit.com](mailto:schroederb@ideafit.com)

Tabitha Bailey  
HetzelMeade Communications  
805.241.2532  
[tabitha@hetzelmeade.com](mailto:tabitha@hetzelmeade.com)

**IDEA Health & Fitness Association Names Mike Huckabee as Inspiration Award Winner  
for His Efforts to Promote a Healthier Lifestyle for All Americans**

*Arkansas Governor Serves as National Role Model and Inspirational Leader Urging Young  
People and Adults to Eat Right and Exercise More as Part of 'Healthy America' Program*

**San Diego – July 26, 2006** – IDEA Health & Fitness Association, the leading membership organization of health and fitness professionals worldwide with more than 20,000 members in over 80 countries, presented Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee with its prestigious Inspiration Award during the 24<sup>th</sup> annual IDEA World Fitness Convention®, held July 25<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup> in Las Vegas. This sought-after award recognizes an individual who has overcome considerable physical adversity or health challenges and now includes regular fitness activity in his or her life while providing inspiration to others.

In 2003, Huckabee was overweight and out of shape to where he could not walk up the marble stairs of the State Capitol without becoming out of breath. When he then was diagnosed with Type II diabetes, Huckabee knew he had to take control of his health—for his own good and the sake of his family and state too. He started exercising regularly and began a healthier eating regime. The results were impressive. Huckabee lost 110 pounds while gaining a new enthusiasm for running. This led him to completing the 2005 Little Rock Marathon and subsequently several others. The governor's new passion for health inspired him to try and get his constituents in better shape too. He authored the "Healthy Arkansas" initiative, created statewide worksite wellness, diabetes control and state employee health assessment programs as well as the "Healthy Restaurant" program.

"Governor Huckabee is an inspirational who has motivated many people throughout Arkansas and the nation to embrace healthier lifestyles," says Kathie Davis, co-founder and executive director of IDEA Health & Fitness Association "He started by taking control of his own health and then spread his passion to his entire state and the nation. By doing so, he has made an enormous difference in people's lives by generating greater awareness about fitness and exercise while setting such a stellar personal example of healthier living. We applaud his unwavering dedication to fitness and salute his energy in inspiring all Americans as he takes his initiatives to the entire nation."

"I am living proof that all Americans can adopt a healthier lifestyle and live to enjoy the benefits," says Huckabee. "I feel that it's my duty to remind all Americans how important it is to eat healthy, exercise three times a week and avoid tobacco in order to live longer. I share my

IDEA Inspiration Award with all the fitness professionals around the country who work so hard to keep people committed to changing their lives and achieving their fitness goals.”

In his role as chairman of the National Governors Association, Huckabee created the “Healthy America” program to promote the benefits of regular exercise and healthier lifestyles. He also authored “Quite Digging Your Grave with a Knife and Folk,” a book that highlights his experiences while motivating others to eat better and exercise.

Huckabee received his inspiration award during an awards presentation on July 26<sup>th</sup> at the annual IDEA World Fitness Convention. This year’s gathering united more than 5,000 professionals from around the globe. As the largest fitness training event in the world, this year’s conference offered more than 275 educational sessions—with an opportunity to earn up to 21 continuing education credits (CECs)—and an industry leading Fitness & Wellness Expo with more than 130 exhibitors showcasing the latest fitness products and services.

**About IDEA Health & Fitness Association**

IDEA Health & Fitness Association is the world’s leading membership organization of health and fitness professionals, with more than 20,000 members in over 80 countries. Since 1982, IDEA has provided health and fitness professionals with pertinent information, educational opportunities, career development programs and industry leadership while helping them enhance the quality of life worldwide through safe, effective fitness and lifestyle programs. IDEA members interact with consumers more than 25 million times a year in the fitness marketplace. For more information on IDEA events, publications, educational products, member services or other activities, visit [www.ideafit.com](http://www.ideafit.com).

###