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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Cindy Campbell 919-923-8857 cincam@aol.com

Susan Jane King 704-239-6333 sking58@carolina.rr.com

New Book OPTIMISM FOR AUTISM Chronicles Personal Triumphs with Autism,

Offers Encouragement, Hope to Those with Ongoing Struggles

Susan Jane King has written a new book OPTIMISM FOR AUTISM, with her autistic son Patrick King, about their struggles and triumphs while living with autism. The book will be released April 2, 2014, World Autism Awareness and Acceptance Day. April is Autism Awareness Month.

Available at [susanjaneking.com](http://susanjaneking.com) (for signed copies) and on [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), OPTIMISM FOR AUTISM recounts how Patrick was diagnosed as mentally retarded, yet received academic scholarships to college, completing his first year in college with a 3.97 grade point average. Doctors told his parents he might never speak; yet, Patrick became a powerful vocalist and gifted public speaker. Extremely uncoordinated, Patrick could not tie his shoes until he was 13 years old; however, he emerged as a swimming champion who received an athletic scholarship to swim in college.

“Patrick and I decided to write this book together to encourage and offer hope not only to those impacted by autism, but also to anyone facing ongoing challenges in their lives,” Susan

said. “The book recounts the difficulties we faced, and it chronicles how we learned to not just survive but actually thrive in the hard places.”

OPTIMISM FOR AUTISM recently was awarded 5 stars by Readers’ Favorite Book Reviews. According to reviewer Mamta Madhavan, OPTIMISM FOR AUTISM is “an uplifting story that will change the perspective of the people working around and with autistic people.”

Readers’ Favorite reviewer Steve Painter said, “The road is often very rocky for those with autism, and King holds nothing back in her assessment of what was needed to provide her son with a chance to overcome this illness and lead a normal life. She writes with the love of a mom and not only covers the great things that happened over the years, but stays grounded by writing that it was never a walk in the rose garden. Despite some setbacks, it was all due to the Lord and His blessings that enabled such a wonderful story to come forth from a frightful beginning. I was blessed to have read this book. Many parents and caregivers would be wise to read it as well, not only for the magnificent writing, but for the powerful tools they can use in their own circumstances.”

“When I picked up OPTIMISM FOR AUTISM, I expected to sit back and objectively read a story about a family's struggles with autism. Instead, I found an engaging book that had me cheering on Patrick as well as questioning and analyzing how I face obstacles in my own life,” said Lisa Wippenbeck, who read an advance copy.

In the book, Susan shares various challenges faced by her, Patrick, and their family as a result of his autism. She offers insights into how they faced those challenges and experienced transformed lives. “Patrick’s Perspective” follows at the end of each chapter, where Patrick relates his own experiences and insights about the topic discussed in the chapter.

“This was perhaps my favorite part,” Wippenbeck said. “Patrick sees things so plainly. It was so positive and so purely written it made me wonder why I make things so complicated.”

After “Patrick’s Perspective,” each chapter concludes with “Something to Think About,” which provides questions for personal reflection and application.

The questions “helped me to process my own thoughts and actions in similar situations. This was a wonderful addition as it moved me beyond reading someone else's story to making changes in my own life,” Wippenbeck said. “Whether you are personally affected by autism or not, this book will inspire you and change the way you approach the world.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control, about one in every 68 children has been identified with an autism spectrum disorder. The CDC Web site states, “Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are a group of developmental disabilities that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges. People with ASDs handle information in their brain differently than other people. ASDs are spectrum disorders. That means ASDs affect each person in different ways, and can range from very mild to severe. People with autistic disorder usually have significant language delays, social and communication challenges, and unusual behaviors and interests. Many people with autistic disorder also have intellectual disability.”

CDC statistics show a 120 percent increase in autism diagnoses since 2002. Autism is the fastest growing developmental disability in the U.S. It affects 2 million people in the United States and 10 million worldwide.

“OPTIMISM FOR AUTISM shows that you can’t always control what happens to you in life, but you can control how you react to it,” King said. “We can learn valuable truths from our

life experiences that impact us—and others—for good. Patrick and I discovered this together, and that is why we have optimism for autism.”

Susan has worked for 21 years with her son Patrick, cultivating an optimistic approach to his autistic challenges. She is a published writer, public speaker, and Bible teacher. “I have a passion to help people facing ongoing challenges to find joy in the journey,” Susan said.

Patrick King attends Pfeiffer University, in Misenheimer, NC, where he is majoring in computer information systems. He is an accomplished vocalist, scholarship athlete, and Presidential Scholar. “It makes me happy to help others understand about autism and be encouraged,” Patrick said.

Susan and Patrick reside in China Grove, NC. To find out more about Susan and Patrick, or to watch a video of their conference presentation, “The Challenges and Blessings of Living with Autism,” go to [susanjaneking.com](http://susanjaneking.com).

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