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**Contact:**

McCain Institute Press Office

press@mccaininstitute.org

202-601-4296

**McCain Institute’s *R.E.A.L. Friends Don’t* Campaign and Chicago Public Arts Group Unveil “Modern Warriors” Mural**

**CHICAGO, IL** (November 10, 2021) — The McCain Institute for International Leadership at Arizona State University (McCain Institute), in partnership with the Chicago Public Arts Group, unveiled their mural, *‘Modern Warriors’*, today, in Chicago’s Little Village neighborhood as part of its [***R.E.A.L. Friends Don’t***](https://www.realfriendsdont.org/) campaign. ***R.E.A.L. Friends Don’t*** raises awareness and creates open, thoughtful dialogue around online safety.

Designed by two Chicago artists and mothers, Delilah “Zena” Salgado and Gloria “Gloe” Talamantes, the mural is intended to provoke thought and spark conversation among community members – including adults and teens – about safety in the digital world.

The McCain Institute and the Chicago Public Arts Group were joined at the event by former Chicago Bears Running Back and NFL veteran Matt Forté, and representatives from the Office of the Chicago Mayor, award winning community artists, and the [Instituto Health Sciences Career Academy](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/www.ihsca.org/__;!!IKRxdwAv5BmarQ!OGRP_HOd4slEkzxd4VaV4853-F7dP134yJ4KX801CI9__6BrYXzOMfoxvsPI_4THd94$). Forté, a Chicago resident and father of four, emphasized the importance of having open and honest conversations with kids about staying safe online.

“As a father, I’m proud to stand with the *R.E.A.L. Friends Don’t* campaign in promoting a safer online experience for our children. With kids spending more time online than ever before, its important they know how to use the platforms safely and what to watch out for.” said **Matt Forté**, former Chicago Bears running back. “We also know that racial minorities are disproportionately at risk of exploitation, that’s why awareness campaigns like this are crucial to ensuring those most vulnerable have the tools and resources to keep themselves and their loved ones safe.”

“A public art mural is a powerful form of communication to our youth and families to provoke thought, conversation and catalyze change,” says **Chantal Healey**, executive director of Chicago Public Art Group. “We hope this mural starts a conversation about online safety so that we can protect our youth from harmful online grooming and predators.”

“By involving the local community in every step of the mural process, from design to production, we create space to begin having those difficult conversations, and take the first steps towards changing the way we look at and respond to online exploitation,” says **Kelsey Syms**, Program Manager, Combatting Human Trafficking at the McCain Institute.

The [***R.E.A.L Friends Don’t***](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/u7061146.ct.sendgrid.net/ls/click?upn=TeZUXWpUv-2B6TCY38pVLo9kQBsA2TiVCiYFmI-2FgUPnTDfKyQnQC5x3LAWeYxfrl4acwzp_-2F2Ce3NhTMiWIwvgWzERJRAl2kBv8DtNUR-2B4zSLNsHmlKn5EzjFfPGh9vChe8UVH1rfcvBJHR5J6M6UcRiVRTFcFPAKC3ajaa0uD2Z7fb3C5f8MBZi8jNlHfXjCQRU-2BoGACNDtvSwgRLRnFS3K4LqAYFQBQZWkumZSecYlvCwpQH3WuOxbpMo29fkPyMcUp5k63hwS3l212rBMTV-2Bmmeyu8RHJ9j21Hjr2Tj0RdRK88tU0Vs36RBsZLKes5o5cpH40nsz5XipksHlJ0kWa94FGG50WqTH2T3ll3RRkeIWgLXEy7hOMZclksw6PMBKdU7BnyI6oa-2FzhukhxerZ4lWXdKmfieqfYgWsYfjP1O7xqYo-3D__;!!IKRxdwAv5BmarQ!LdRGz5Dm2EBRPNm4zOmA7-1iICg9t5M_1OcTWtn-p14N7W5h2XRVUQjzFIY3mXa7FtM$) campaign increases awareness and educates parents, caregivers, and young people about online safety, and empowers parents to protect their children from harmful content, grooming, or online exploitation. The unveiling of the mural comes on the heels of a four-city ***R.E.A.L. Friends Don’t*** billboard press tour in Texas, where billboards are expected to reach more than 100 million Texans by the end of this year.

**About the McCain Institute for International Leadership at Arizona State University**
Inspired by the character-driven leadership of Sen. John S. McCain and his family’s legacy of public service, the McCain Institute fights to advance freedom, prosperity, security and human dignity for all Americans and the world.

**About Arizona State University**
Arizona State University has developed a new model for the American research university, creating an institution that is committed to access, excellence and impact. ASU measures itself by those it includes, not by those it excludes. As the prototype for a New American University, ASU pursues research that contributes to the public good, and ASU assumes major responsibility for the economic, social and cultural vitality of the communities that surround it.

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