

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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The Leukemia Ball, Presented by PhRMA, Celebrating 30th Anniversary, to Feature Blockbuster Entertainment from Comedian Jim Gaffigan and Pop Superstar Andy Grammer

PhRMA Continues Long-Term Presenting Sponsorship

December 12, 2016 (Washington, DC) – Celebrating its 30th year as one of the Washington area’s most prominent charity events, the Leukemia Ball, presented by the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) will be held Saturday, March 11, 2017, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. Since the first Leukemia Ball in 1987, the event has raised more than \$52 million and continues to dedicate efforts to raising money for life-saving cancer research and patient programs funded by The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS). PhRMA, the trade association representing the country’s leading innovative biopharmaceutical research companies, is continuing its presenting sponsorship.



“PhRMA is proud to continue our partnership with LLS to further its mission of improving the outlook for cancer patients and their families, particularly in this milestone year for the Leukemia Ball,” said Stephen J. Ubl, president and chief executive officer, PhRMA. “Together, we are dedicated to finding new treatments and cures for cancer patients. Significant advances in recent years give us hope that we are closer than ever to a world without blood cancers.”

Guests at the 2017 gala will enjoy entertainment from actor, *New York Times* bestselling author and Grammy nominated comedian Jim Gaffigan, known for his family-focused “clean” comedy. In 2015, Gaffigan became one of only ten comedians in history to sell out the famed Madison Square Garden arena for the finale of his “Contagious” tour, he opened for Pope Francis in front of more than one million people in Philadelphia, and his television show, “The Jim Gaffigan Show,” debuted on TV Land to enormous ratings and reviews. Most recently during Super Bowl 50, it was revealed that Gaffigan is KFC’s new Colonel Sanders.

The crowd will also sing along to triple platinum smash hit “Honey, I’m Good” and other songs from pop star Andy Grammer. Grammer famously began his career as a street performer, logging 10,000 hours of practice on the boulevards of Los Angeles with his car battery powered amplifier and acoustic guitar. Named one of Billboard Magazine’s 2011 Artists to Watch, Grammer now resides at the epicenter of the music industry. Fresh off a tour with Gavin Degraw, Grammar recently released a new single, “Fresh Eyes,” which has become an online phenomenon with more than 70 million streams.

The Leukemia Ball is one of Washington, D.C.’s largest non-political black-tie events and is expected to raise more than \$3.5 million for LLS’s National Capital Area Chapter and its mission to cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin’s disease and myeloma, and to improve the quality of life of patients and their families.

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“LLS recently committed \$40.3 million in new research investments which is comprised of 75 new research grants that will fund a diverse array of cancer research to find better treatments and cures for patients,” said Beth Gorman, National Capital Area Chapter Executive Director. “Fundraising events such as the Leukemia Ball make that research possible, are critical to raising awareness, and directly impact the lives of blood cancer patients everywhere.”

The 2017 Leukemia Ball is co-chaired by Wayne Berson, CEO of BDO, and David DiLuigi, Market President, Greater Washington & Central Virginia for Wilmington Trust, N.A. They lead an esteemed volunteer Executive Committee of more than 50 high-ranking executives representing major organizations across the Washington, D.C. area who volunteer their time and efforts to create a memorable evening and raise millions of dollars in support of LLS’s mission.

“I am inspired by the Washington, D.C. metro community and the ability of the most influential companies to come together to support the cancer research and programs that are funded by LLS,” said Berson. “The mission of LLS is of personal importance to me but also critical so that we may see cures to cancer in our lifetime, and as such I am truly humbled to continue serving as the Ball’s co-chair especially for the 30th anniversary.”

Seventy-four cents of every dollar spent by LLS funds its mission, and LLS’s commitment to funding innovative research projects has contributed to an unprecedented rise in survival rates over recent years. For example, today, the five-year survival rate for the most common form of childhood leukemia is more than 90 percent, up from 3 percent in 1964.

“LLS has been at the forefront of advances in blood cancer treatments for decades. With the support of LLS funding and advocacy, nearly 40 percent of all cancer drugs approved by the FDA since 2000 are being used to treat blood cancers,” said DiLuigi. “However, the fight is not over. Nearly one-third of all blood cancer patients still do not survive five years past diagnosis. I am committed to supporting LLS’s goal of a world without blood cancers.”

The Leukemia Ball has long been recognized as one of Washington, D.C.’s most popular black-tie galas. The silent auction, which raised nearly \$265,000 in 2016, is one of the area’s largest, featuring a variety of travel packages, including American Airlines air travel to exotic locations. The event also boasts a Mercedes-Benz raffle featuring a first prize of 2017 Mercedes-Benz E300 4Matic Sedan (MSRP\$52,150) and second prize of 2 spots at AMG Driving Academy at Laguna Seca Raceway in Salinas, CA including hotel & airfare (Value: \$6,300) Tickets are \$100, and only 5,000 are printed.

The event’s popularity over the past 30 years is also largely due to the featured entertainment. Past headliners have included Howie Mandel, Diana Ross, Jay Leno, Dennis Miller, John Mellencamp, Liza Minnelli, Jerry Seinfeld, Reba McEntyre, Jim Belushi, Dan Ackroyd and Lionel Richie.



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A variety of sponsorship opportunities for the 2017 Leukemia Ball are available. For more information, please contact Kelly Kent at kelly.kent@lls.org or (703) 399-2930.

About The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society® (LLS) is the world's largest voluntary health agency dedicated to blood cancer. The LLS mission: Cure leukemia, lymphoma and multiple myeloma and improve the quality of life for patients and their families. LLS funds lifesaving blood cancer research around the world, provides free information and support services and is the voice for all blood cancer patients seeking access to quality, affordable, coordinated care.

Founded in 1949 and headquartered in Rye Brook, N.Y., LLS has chapters throughout the United States and Canada. To learn more, visit www.LLS.org. Patients should contact the Information Resource Center at [\(800\) 955-4572](tel:8009554572), Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET.

About The National Capital Area Chapter

LLS has 54 U.S. chapters, and the National Capital Area Chapter is one of the highest revenue-generating chapters in the nation. The National Capital Area Chapter serves Washington D.C.; the Maryland counties of Prince George and Montgomery; and the Virginia counties of Loudoun, Fairfax, Arlington and Prince William and the city of Alexandria. More than 2,700 patients and families are served by the chapter each year.

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