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Contact: Denise Shields, Public Relations and Communications Manager
(718)869-2022, dshields@ehs.org

St. John's ICARE Foundation Hosts Inaugural Together We Rise Blue Phoenix Gala

Far Rockaway, New York, May 22, 2024 – It was a night to remember as the St. John's ICARE Foundation held its inaugural Together We Rise Blue Phoenix Gala on May 16 at the Village Club at Lake Success.

The sold-out blue-tie event brought together Episcopal Health Services board trustees, executive leaders, team members, St. John's ICARE Foundation sponsors, honorees, volunteers, and community members. The event raised critical funds for the ICARE Foundation, which supports the mission and vision of St. John's Episcopal Hospital and Episcopal Health Services through investments in capital projects, equipment, community initiatives, and special programs.

"I am absolutely blown away by the overwhelming support for our first ICARE Foundation gala. Every day, we work hard to support our health system, the Rockaways, and surrounding communities, ensuring they have what they need to thrive. It is humbling and deeply gratifying to see our leaders, team members, sponsors, and community members come together to help us fulfill our mission. I'm incredibly grateful for their support," said Nancy Leghart, St. John's ICARE Foundation Executive Director.

The evening's program began with a beautiful rendition of "Rise Up" performed by singer/songwriter Norman Alexander. Leghart then took the stage to introduce the gala's emcee, Emmy award-winning anchor, author, journalist, and Rockaway native Cheryl Wills. Wills highlighted the ICARE Foundation's invaluable support of EHS and its commitment to delivering high-quality, value-based care to the Rockaways, Five Towns, and surrounding communities.

Honorees celebrated at the event included Rosaline and Marvin Eisenstadt, of the Marvin and Barbara Eisenstadt Charitable Foundation, who received the Philanthropic Legacy Award for demonstrating exceptional dedication and generosity in their support of healthcare initiatives. Dr. Heidi Chumley accepted the Innovator in Healthcare Award on behalf of Ross University School of Medicine and the American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine for their

groundbreaking work in the field of healthcare education, while Florence Ferguson received the Dr. Edward Williams, Jr., Community Service Award for her outstanding efforts in making a positive difference in the lives of others.

“The St. John’s ICARE Foundation was started with the vision to create a culture of philanthropy for EHS,” said St. John’s ICARE Foundation President Renee Hastick-Motes. “Each honoree has supported our vision and made a significant impact on our health system and the Rockaway community. Their contributions exemplify the spirit of generosity and innovation we strive to foster. Their dedication and support, help us ensure we address some of those social determinants of health, among other capital and programmatic needs. I’m profoundly grateful for their support.”

A highlight of the evening was a video reflecting on the challenges St. John’s Episcopal Hospital, Episcopal Health Services, and the Rockaway community have endured over the last few years, including Hurricane Sandy, the COVID-19 pandemic, and a fire that damaged the hospital, as well as the positive changes that have occurred since.

“We selected ‘Together We Rise, Blue Phoenix Gala’ because it truly represents our community’s ability to endure and rise from the ashes,” said Leghart.

Aside from the incredible musical performances delivered by Norman Alexander, guests were also entertained by harpist Erin Hill, and Earl Brooks Jr. on the steel drums, who graced the evening with their beautiful artistry.

Special thanks were given to all of the gala’s top sponsors, including Jzanus, New York Cancer & Blood Specialists, COPE Health Solutions, EHS Medical Staff, LAZ Health Care Services, Shannon Group, DCO Energy, MAXOR, Dr. Donald and Mary Morrish and Tom Fitzpatrick Electrical Contractors.

All proceeds from the Gala will go towards supporting St. John's Episcopal Hospital and Episcopal Health Services in their mission to provide quality healthcare services to the community.



St. John's ICARE Foundation Executive Director Nancy Leghart (second, right) and President Renee Hastick-Motes (left) are pictured with the Together We Rise Blue Phoenix Gala honorees (from left): Florence Ferguson, Marvin and Rosaline Eisenstadt, Dr. Heidi Chumley, Dean of Ross University School of Medicine, and Episcopal Health Services CEO Dr. Donald T. Morrish, MD, MMM (right).



Dr. Donald T. Morrish, MD, MMM, CEO of Episcopal Health Services (left) is pictured with members of the health system's executive leadership team, who attended in support of the event.



St. John's ICARE Foundation President Renee Hastick-Motes (left) and Executive Director Nancy Leghart (right) are pictured with gala emcee, Emmy award-winning anchor, author, journalist, and Rockaway native Cheryl Wills.



Dr. Donald T. Morrish, MD, MMM, CEO of Episcopal Health Services (left) is pictured with (from left): St. John's ICARE Foundation Officer Bertrand Batista, President Renee Hastick-Motes, Executive Director Nancy Leghart and Joe Caraccia, Senior Vice President of Jzanus.



Singer/songwriter Norman Alexander performed an inspirational rendition of “Rise Up” to kick off the evening.

Photos courtesy of St. John's ICARE Foundation

About St. John's ICARE Foundation

The St. John's ICARE Foundation, created in 2021, fosters a culture of philanthropy to secure, manage and distribute gifts in support of the mission and vision of Episcopal Health Services and St. John's Episcopal Hospital. The ICARE Foundation, which stands for Innovation, Compassion, Respect and Empathy, raises awareness and funds in support of equipment, capital projects, special programs and community initiatives. To make a donation, visit sjicarefoundation.org or call (718)-869-8062 for more information.

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