



**The  
National Pancreas  
Foundation**

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## **THE NATIONAL PANCREAS FOUNDATION**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **The National Pancreas Foundation's "Courage for A Cure" Gala Hits A Home Run!**

July 1, 2014 - PNC Park, home of the Pittsburgh Pirates, was the perfect setting for the annual "Courage for a Cure Gala" hosted by the Western Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Pancreas Foundation (NPF). Held on Friday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, the event truly "hit one out of the park" by raising a **record \$270,000** for critical research and patient support programs.

NPF is a nonprofit organization that provides hope for those suffering from pancreatitis and pancreatic cancer through funding cutting edge research, advocating for new and better therapies, and providing support and education for patients, caregivers, and health care professionals. The gala is just one opportunity to recognize those who have made significant contributions to this mission.

One such contributor is Dr. Kenneth K. W. Lee, who was presented with the 2014 Courage Award. Dr. Lee has served as the Medical Director of the Western Pennsylvania chapter of the NPF for the past 5 years and has participated in numerous NPF patient education events. Dr. Lee is also the Jane and Carl Citron Endowed Professor of Surgery, and serves as Vice Chair and Program Director of Graduate Education and Gastrointestinal, Pancreaticobiliary and Oncologic Surgery.

Ms. Heather Roman received the Joan Birsic Dawson Service Award posthumously for her incredible commitment of time, creativity and energy to the cause. During Heather's tenure as co-chair of the auction committee for the Courage for a Cure Gala, NPF raised more than \$300,000 in auction proceeds.

K & L Gates LLP and Celgene were event sponsors with additional support from Snow Capital, AMPCO Pittsburgh, UPMC, Highmark, Federated Investors Foundation, and Abbvie.

The event itself was a glittering and fun celebration. Stephen Cropper, WPXI's meteorologist, served as the gala emcee. The guest list included former Pittsburgh Pirates great Stephen Blass; co-founders of the NPF, Tom and Patter Birsic; Pittsburgh Steeler Cortez Allen and his mother Lois; Dan and Shelly Onorato; Courage Award Recipient Dr. Ken Lee and his wife Sharon; Heather Roman's husband Andy and daughters Carolyn Roman Starrett and Becky Roman Chueiri; Campos de Oliveira; Andrew and Michelle Aloe; "Scandal" Emmy Award winner Dan Bucatinsky; and award winning movie producer and writer Don Roos.

Patter Birsic, co-founder of the NPF, acknowledges that we are still too far from a cure. Over the years, though, she has witnessed noteworthy progress: "The bridge to a cure may not be as short as we would want, but new diagnostic approaches, technological advances in genetic analysis and the discovery of biomarkers have shortened the span."

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## **About The National Pancreas Foundation**

Founded in 1997, the National Pancreas Foundation provides hope for those suffering from pancreatitis and pancreatic cancer through funding cutting-edge research, advocating for new and better therapies and providing support and education for patients, caregivers and healthcare professionals. The NPF is the only foundation dedicated to patients suffering from all forms of pancreas disease. The NPF advances its mission through a combination of research grants and advocacy. For more information, please visit [www.pancreasfoundation.org](http://www.pancreasfoundation.org).