



Thompson Foundation's Seventh Annual "It's In the Cards" Dinner Gala Coming Soon To The Four Seasons St. Louis

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St. Louis Cardinals Manager Mike Matheny Returns as Honorary Chair



St. Louis, Mo. (April 22, 2013)– The Thompson Foundation for Autism's largest annual fundraising event is coming to the Four Seasons St. Louis on Thursday, May 16, to raise support and awareness about the foundation and how it makes a difference for children and families affected by autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Tom Ackerman, Sports Director for KMOX will be the emcee for the evening and Rene Knott, Sports Director for KSDK will be the auctioneer. Members of the community are invited to join Ackerman and Knott, as well as honorary chair St. Louis Cardinals Manager, Mike Matheny, event co-chairs John Sondag, President AT&T Missouri; Patty Arnold, Vice President-Philanthropy Mercy Health Foundation; Tim Ney, Principal Mutual Fund Operations at Edward Jones, and Scott Zajac, Managing Partner Advantage Capital, along with managing co-chair Jack Reis and event planner Donna Wilkinson, at this not-to-be-missed evening aimed at helping to improve the quality of life for many children with ASD in St. Louis and the state of Missouri.

Auction items at the event include: a four night stay at the Four Seasons Resort in Hualalai, Hawaii, a weekend stay at the Hyatt in Downtown Chicago, dinner parties, cocktail parties, tickets to a Dodgers-Cardinals game in Las Angeles and much more.

Produced by the Gala Steering Committee, the event will feature a reception with Matheny and other Cardinals players, as well as the opportunity to mingle with others who are passionate about helping people who have faced the challenges of autism. Past attendees have included other well known sports personalities including Tony LaRussa, Kevin Demoff, Norm Stewart, Gary Pinkel, David Freese, Mark McGwire, Red Schoendienst, Rick Ankiel, Allen Craig, John Jay, Jason Motte and other St. Louis fan favorites.

“Like so many, I know families who have faced the difficulties of autism and it is a pleasure to be returning as chair for this wonderful event that raises money for such a worthy organization,” said Matheny. “The work supported by the Thompson Foundation has positively impacted the lives of many families and children in the St. Louis area and across the State of Missouri, and participation in the gala and auction is a great way to ensure that this important work continues.”

More than \$1.5 million has been raised since the annual fundraising event was started in 2007.

“When we consider that an estimated one out of 88 children are diagnosed with ASD, it helps to underscore the need for the research, training and service programs that benefit from this event,” notes Al Eberhard, executive director of the Thompson Foundation.

According to The Thompson Center Executive Director, Dr. Stephen Kanne, patients at the center will directly benefit from the money raised during the gala.

“The generous support we receive at the gala from the St. Louis community provides the little extras that mean so much to us when delivering care to these families,” said Kanne.

Founded in 2006, The Thompson Foundation (thompsonfoundation.org) is an organization whose mission is to strengthen children and families affected by ASD through raising awareness and support for interventions, education and research. The foundation acts as a policy review board for the Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment Disorders at the University of Missouri, and provides financial support for the center and other entities working in the field of autism. All of the proceeds from the event will be donated to the works of the Thompson Center. The Thompson Center, founded by Affton natives Bill and Nancy Thompson who reside in Southern California, is a national leader in confronting the challenges of autism and other developmental conditions through its collaborative research, training and service programs. For additional information, visit <http://thompsoncenter.missouri.edu> or <http://thompsonfoundation.org/>.

The Thompson Foundation for Autism is a 501©3 non- profit organization.
Sponsorships and ticket information for the gala are available by contacting Donna
Wilkinson at 314-367-8118.