

Contact:

Jon Florio
The Hope Gala Communications Director
jon@nychopegala.com

The Hope Gala to Honor Ryan McGarry as First Recipient of The Leah Still Award for Courage

NEW YORK (December 9, 2015) – The Hope Gala today announced that Ryan McGarry, cancer survivor, physician, filmmaker and executive producer of CBS' CODE BLACK, will be the first recipient of The Leah Still Award for Courage at the 2016 Hope Gala. The award will be presented by Devon Still, former Cincinnati Bengals defensive tackle, on behalf of his daughter, Leah.

The Leah Still Award for Courage is a new honor that will recognize an individual who has taken significant steps to raise awareness and has been personally impacted by childhood cancer. The award was created in honor of Devon and Leah Still who made national headlines after Leah was diagnosed with cancer at the age of four.

"I'm humbled that The Hope Gala has established this award on behalf of my daughter Leah, and I cannot think of a more deserving recipient of the first Leah Still Award for Courage than Ryan. He has defied the odds and made an impact on the medical and cancer community," said Devon Still. "While the fight against childhood cancer is never easy, it is comforting to know that organizations like The Hope Gala are committed to doing all they can to find a cure."

The Hope Gala and Devon selected McGarry based on his inspiring story as a stage IV cancer survivor, his pursuit of a medical degree after his diagnosis, his work as an ER doctor, and his explorations of health care humanism in cinema and television.

"Like many others, I watched the courage that Devon and Leah showed in their fight, and I am honored that The Hope Gala and Devon have selected me as this year's Leah Still Award for Courage recipient," said McGarry. "Surviving cancer has impacted my life in many ways, including my decision to pursue a medical degree, and my desire to support those who have also been affected by the disease."

McGarry studied English at The Pennsylvania State University and received his medical degree at The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine and a Physician at The Weill Medical College of Cornell University/New York Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City. McGarry's feature-length documentary CODE BLACK is an award winning first-person reflection of his own training at the Los Angeles County General Hospital. It inspired the current CBS primetime drama series of the same name, for which McGarry writes and directs.

"We are honored to have Ryan join us at this year's Gala so that we can celebrate his accomplishments, as well as his dedication to eradicating childhood cancer," said Kelly Dormer, The Hope Gala Executive Director. "The Hope Gala's mission is to spread hope to those who have previously or are currently battling cancer, and Ryan, Devon, and Leah are perfect examples of the hope that exists within the bleakness of this horrible disease."

McGarry will be honored at the 2016 Hope Gala which will take place on March 12, 2016 at Capitale in New York City. The annual event brings supporters together to celebrate life and to raise funds for the Penn State Dance Marathon (THON) whose sole beneficiary is Four Diamonds. Four Diamonds, in turn, assists Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital and families in need of financial aid, medical assistance, and emotional support during their battle with childhood cancer.

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About The Hope Gala

The Hope Gala is an annual gala and year-round fundraising organization established to support the fundraising efforts of Penn State Dance Marathon (THON). Since 2008, The Hope Gala has raised over \$400,000 towards the mission of conquering childhood cancer. Four Diamonds is the sole beneficiary of THON's fundraising activities and THON is the largest contributor to Four Diamonds. All proceeds benefit childhood cancer patients and their families in need of financial aid, medical assistance, and emotional support at the Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital. The Hope Gala was founded by the New York City Chapter of the Penn State Alumni Association with support from the Northern New Jersey Chapter. For more information, visit our website at www.nychopegala.com.