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Helping Kids with Cancer Radiothon raises more than \$75,000 to support lifesaving pediatric cancer treatments in Southwest Florida

February 7, 2020 The 18th annual Mel's Diner Helping Kids with Cancer Radiothon raised more than \$75,000 on Jan. 24 from the Southwest Florida community, money that will fund lifesaving cancer treatments for children at Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida.

The Radiothon, broadcast live by Cat Country 107.1 from Mel's Diner in Cape Coral, generates support for Barbara's Friends – Golisano Children's Hospital Cancer Fund. Barbara's Friends provides equipment, medical services, therapeutic activities and financial help through the Kimmie's Angels Family Assistance Program so parents can focus on helping their children get well.

Since last year's Radiothon, the gracious Southwest Florida community has given more than \$860,000 to Barbara's Friends, which is celebrating its 25th year in 2020. Barbara's Friends is named in honor of the late Barbara Haskell, a breast cancer patient who was in awe of the bravery displayed by children who were battling cancer.

"Every year for the last 18 years, the Radiothon has not only generated donations for Barbara's Friends, but it has educated our community through the compelling stories shared by patients and hospital leadership how these donations are saving children's lives in Southwest Florida," said Al Kinkle, Chairman of Barbara's Friends. "Golisano Children's Hospital provides exceptional pediatric health care programs and specialized services, and we are so grateful to be celebrating 25 years of Barbara's Friends and helping so many children and their families in their fight against cancer."

Golisano Children's Hospital does not deny treatment for any child as a result of their family's inability to pay.

Co-hosted by Cat Country 107.1 FM on-air personalities Mike Tyler and Amy Lynn, donors made pledges through the telephone, website and text message, as well as onsite at all five Mel's Diner locations in Southwest Florida who also offered special \$5 donation breakfasts. Valvoline, Tamiami Ford, Hyundai and Genesis of Naples, 21st Century Oncology, Fox 4, Crestwell School of Fort Myers and other corporate partners contributed to Radiothon, making this year's event a great success.

Throughout the day, Cat Country 107.1 listeners and Mel's guests heard from doctors, nurses, hospital administrators, celebrity guests, pediatric cancer patients and their

families, each of whom shared compelling stories of hope and healing.

“Our mission is to bring world-class care to the children of Southwest Florida,” said Armando Llechu, the hospital’s chief administrative officer. “We cannot live that mission without the support and partnership of our community’s residents, businesses and philanthropic organizations. Their support helps fund exceptional medical programs and specialized services that otherwise wouldn’t be offered to the children of our community.”

About Barbara’s Friends – Helping Kids With Cancer at Golisano Children’s Hospital

Established in 1995, Barbara’s Friends provides equipment, staffing and services to support lifesaving cancer care for children from across southwest Florida at Golisano Children’s Hospital. The Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Program is the only program of its kind in Southwest Florida and has served over 8,000 patients since opening. No child is denied treatment or turned away as a result of their family’s inability to pay for care. For more information about the Barbara’s Friends fund and supporting child patients in your community, please call Lee Health Foundation at (239) 343-6950 or visit BarbarasFriends.org.

About Golisano Children’s Hospital

Established in 1994, Golisano Children’s Hospital of Southwest Florida has been named a “Top Hospital” by The Leapfrog Group for the past three years. It is the only recognized children’s hospital between Tampa and Miami. Lee Health opened the new 134-bed Golisano Children’s Hospital in May 2017, relocating the children’s hospital from the adjacent HealthPark Medical Center. It includes comprehensive pediatric services including a 24-hour pediatric emergency department, hematology-oncology unit, milk lab, Regional Perinatal Intensive Care Center, and Level II and Level III NICU with 70 private rooms. Golisano Children’s Hospital is proud to have been named Soliant’s 2019 Most Beautiful Hospital in the U.S., a recognition determined by popular vote. For more information, visit GolisanoChildrensSWFL.org.

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