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2019 Carousel Ball Raises Record-Breaking $3.5 Million for the Cardiac Center at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

Black-Tie Event Also Honors the Wood Family, Founding Family of Wawa

Philadelphia, PA (October 13, 2019) — Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia’s (CHOP) 2019 Carousel Ball, presented by Wawa, raised a record-breaking $3.5 million to benefit the Cardiac Center at CHOP.

A signature fundraiser since 1957, the Carousel Ball celebrates the many remarkable discoveries made at CHOP that have profoundly changed pediatric medicine and honors countless supporters who have helped raise critical funds to fuel the breakthroughs of tomorrow. Held on October 12 and emceed by TODAY Co-Anchor Sheinelle Jones, this year’s black-tie event welcomed nearly 900 of the region’s greatest philanthropists, corporate leaders and patient families. The event was held at the Met Philadelphia, a recently renovated historic opera house on North Broad Street.

“The Carousel Ball is always a very special evening of celebration and gratitude,” said Madeline Bell, President and CEO of Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. “It’s a night where we celebrate the power of philanthropy to support our mission of pushing the limits of possibility for today’s patients and advancing life-changing research to create a better tomorrow.”

As the beneficiary of the 2019 Carousel Ball, the Hospital’s Cardiac Center is one of the world’s largest and most accomplished pediatric heart centers, offering care for children with acquired and congenital heart conditions from around the globe. The Center performs a high volume of cardiothoracic surgeries, including over 500 open heart procedures a year – and has some of the best patient outcomes in the world. Researchers and clinicians at CHOP are making great progress in revolutionizing treatments and improving outcomes for children with heart disease.

“On behalf of the Cardiac Center, I’d like to thank all of the Carousel Ball sponsors, co-chairs, committee members and the Wood family,” said Dr. Jonathan Chen, Chief of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery and Co-Director of the Cardiac Center at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. “Through their commitment and generosity, they all help play a role in what is next for the Cardiac Center – innovative treatments, ground-breaking research, and ultimately better outcomes for patients affected by heart disease.”

The Carousel Ball has only had three event honorees in its history. This year, distinguished event honorees were Richard D. Wood, Jr. and the Wood family, the founding family of the convenience store chain, Wawa. Across generations, the Wood family and Wawa have been
invaluable partners to and champions of CHOP. From Richard Wood, Sr. leading the project to move CHOP from its original South Philadelphia location to its current University City location, to creating a chair endowment to ensure the future of a health program, to providing free coffee and beverages to CHOP families and visitors on a daily basis, Wawa has helped transform the lives of countless CHOP patients and their families for more than 160 years.

“All of us at the Wawa family and my own family have the deepest gratitude for the professionals at CHOP who are innovating every day and constantly finding better ways to treat and care for patients,” said Richard D. Wood, Jr., Chairman of Wawa. “The CHOP mission hits close to home for so many of us, and we are all honored to continue supporting that mission and look forward to a future full of life-changing breakthroughs.”

For more information about the Carousel Ball, please visit: [http://carouselball.chop.edu](http://carouselball.chop.edu).

**About Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia**

Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia was founded in 1855 as the nation’s first pediatric hospital. Through its long-standing commitment to providing exceptional patient care, training new generations of pediatric healthcare professionals and pioneering major research initiatives, Children’s Hospital has fostered many discoveries that have benefited children worldwide. Its pediatric research program is among the largest in the country. In addition, its unique family-centered care and public service programs have brought the 564-bed hospital recognition as a leading advocate for children and adolescents. For more information, visit [http://www.chop.edu](http://www.chop.edu).