

Martha Beck Speaks at Fifth Annual Anna's Angels Gala

WRITTEN BY JENNIFER HOLLAND GILMORE

THE ANNA'S ANGELS GALA to support Down syndrome research is back for its fifth — and possibly most exciting — year. Organizers have secured noteworthy life coach Martha Beck, PhD, a best-selling New York Times author, regular guest on “The Oprah Winfrey Show” and “Good Morning America,” and columnist for *O The Oprah Magazine*, as a special guest speaker at the April 19 event to be held at Prestonwood Country Club.

“Martha Beck is not only a well-known life coach and author, but she is also the mother of a son with Down syndrome,” said Michelle Pfeiffer, founder of Anna's Angels. “Her book, ‘Expecting Adam: A True Story of Birth, Rebirth and Everyday Magic,’ chronicles her experience with her son, so we share a common bond to bring more understanding and support to children like our own. I am thrilled she chose to support Anna's Angels.”

Beck is equally enthused that her schedule permitted her to be a part of the gala. “I wish I had time to participate in every event as important and soulful as this one,” she commented. “I love to interact with individuals and organizations who are giving their energy and attention to the really important people in the world, that is, those who are in some way overlooked, discounted or disenfranchised. I'm so looking forward to the warmth and compassion that always seem to gather around people with Down syndrome.”

The evening will feature dinner, dancing and a cash bar, as well as a live and silent auction. Proceeds will provide ongoing support for Down syndrome research at Duke University Medical Center. In October, Anna's Angels awarded three research grants totaling \$125,000, which are making it possible to bring experts in areas of cell biology and neurology together

with researchers in the Comprehensive Down Syndrome Clinic to gain a better understanding of issues affecting people with Down syndrome.

“Bringing these disparate areas of research together will take Down syndrome research to the next level,” said Pfeiffer, “and much of the information gained can be extrapolated to the greater population, including those with cancer and Alzheimer's. It's very exciting.”

A summit to bring these researchers as well as other doctors in the field together for discussion and future collaboration is also planned for the gala weekend.

“We are inviting our key donors to be a part of this summit to see firsthand how their support is impacting the synergy around Down syndrome research,” explained Pfeiffer. “While we've raised a lot of money, it's a small amount compared to the dollars being funneled into other areas of research. We can be proud of just how well we've been able to maximize our investment, because the research is far beyond where we were five years ago. Our donors should know how much we appreciate what they've given.” ◀



Fifth Annual Anna's Angels Gala April 19

6:30 p.m. – midnight
Prestonwood Country Club
Dinner, dancing, cash bar,
silent and live auction

Tickets: \$90 per person or \$900 per table of 10 if purchased by March 14. \$100 per person or \$1,000 per table after March 14.

For more information,
contact Michelle Pfeiffer at
michellepfeiffer@nc.rr.com.