



Anna's Angels Inspires Hope, Research for Down Syndrome

ABOUT 200 CARYITES enjoyed an evening of dinner and dancing while supporting Down syndrome and leukemia research at the Sixth Annual Anna's Angels Gala on April 18 at Prestonwood Country Club's grand ballroom. A silent and live auction, hosted by news anchor Steve Daniels, of ABC 11 Eyewitness News, helped raise \$93,000 for the cause and Duke Children's Hospital.

Anna's Angels was founded in 2003 by Michelle Pfeiffer and Andy Merrills when their 8-year-old daughter, Anna, who has

Down syndrome, was diagnosed with leukemia at the age of 18 months.

Dr. Joseph St. Geme, chairman of pediatrics at Duke Children's Hospital, and Jill Hinton Keel, a psychologist and developmental disability consultant, spoke at the event in support of Down syndrome awareness and research. "We could not pursue our endeavors without the help of Anna's Angels," St. Geme stated at the gala.

In attendance for the sixth year in a row was donor Kelly McNelis, who travels from Seattle each year to attend the gala.

"I like the fact that the organization is looking out of the normal research and giving the opportunity to funds that don't usually get supported," she said. "Anna also keeps me coming back — I just adore her."

"Our ultimate goal is to improve the lives of individuals with Down syndrome," said Pfeiffer. The organization has taken the steps toward doing so by raising more than \$400,000 to date.

For more information on Anna's Angels, go to www.annas-angels.org.

[1] Anna's Angels co-founder Michelle Pfeiffer. [2] The evening ended with dancing and music provided by DJ George. [3] Many items and services were offered through the silent auction, including a portrait session with William Branston III. [4] Duke Children's Hospital's Dr. Joseph St. Geme. [5] Master of Ceremonies Steve Daniels. [6] Guests enjoyed dinner and the live auction in the Prestonwood Grand Ballroom.