



For Immediate Release
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Hospice Nurse, Miss America 1988 Crown Jewel of 21st Butterfly Luncheon

Kaye Lani Rae Rafko-Wilson, RN shares touching stories with hospice nurses and supporters to launch National Nurses Week

Houston, TX - The Houston Hospice Butterfly Luncheon welcomed more than 200 guests to The Junior League of Houston, Friday, May 6, 2022. The 21st annual event raised \$155,000 for Houston Hospice and its Butterfly Program for pediatric hospice patients and their families.

This year's special event thoughtfully corresponded with National Nurses Week. Featured keynote speaker was **Miss America 1988 Kaye Lani Rae Rafko-Wilson, RN** who holds the distinction of being the first registered nurse to win the competition. Following her year of service, Rafko-Wilson became a hospice nurse and started the Hospice of Monroe in her hometown of Monroe, Michigan. She is currently the executive director of Gabby's Grief Center in Monroe.

Long-time supporters, friends, and advocates of Houston Hospice, Philanthropist **Janet F. McKenzie**, was the Chair of the event and recognized top donors Cornelia Long, John P. McGovern Foundation, Tallwood Medical Equipment, and H. Richard "Rich" Walton. Houston Hospice Board Member **Sarita Armstrong Hixon** served as Honorary Chair.

Rana McClelland, President & CEO of Houston Hospice thanked sponsors, attendees, and those who helped Houston Hospice go above and beyond to offer the best possible end-of-life care. McClelland also announced the kick-off of National Nurses Week, an annual celebration to honor the contributions and sacrifices of our nurses and to remind us to thank the medical professionals who play a critical role in improving access and quality health care for the community and the world.

Emcee **Lisa Malosky** welcomed guests and Chaplain David Gonzalez Guajardo gave the invocation to guests calling for kindness, peace, and nurturing love to those who need us at this time.

Guests included: Rose Cullen, Joyce T. Salhoot, Board Chair, Paul Mansfield, M.D., and wife Kay Mansfield, Sue Stiles White, Board Member; Al W. Gatmaitan, Board Member, and wife Nancy Gatmaitan, Mary Ellen Meyer, Sarita Hixon, Honorary Chair and Advisory Member, and husband Bob Hixon, H. Richard (Rich) Walton, Board Member, Conrad Johnson, Board Member, and wife Jill Johnson, Rana McClelland, President & CEO, Aida Matic, Vice President of Philanthropy and Community Engagement, Janet McKenzie, Event Chair; Elizabeth Strauch, MD, Vice President & Medical Director, and the Butterfly Team.

Attendees enjoyed a delicious grilled chicken and salad lunch with choice of key lime pie or chocolate pecan pie for dessert.

As one of the core compassionate care services offered by Houston Hospice, The Butterfly Program is dedicated to the needs of children with life-limiting conditions and their families. Individualized care, education, advocacy, resources, and a dedicated hospice team are provided on a 24/7 basis. Additionally, the Butterfly Team consists of a pediatric physician, registered nurses, hospice aides, social workers, chaplains, bereavement counselors and volunteers.

Houston Hospice provides uncompromising, compassionate, end-of-life care to patients and families across 13 counties in Texas. Established in 1980, we are the oldest, largest, independent, nonprofit hospice in Greater Houston and a member of the Texas Medical Center.

For more information about visit HoustonHospice.org or call 713-Hospice.