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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**“The Greatest Gateway” Gala**

**Raises $4.1 Million**

**For Gateway for Cancer Research**

**The Awe-Inspiring Evening Was Headlined by Brian McKnight and Co-chaired by**

**Richard and Stacie Stephenson**

**CHICAGO (OCTOBER 21, 2018) –** [Gateway for Cancer Research](https://www.gatewaycr.org/) (Gateway), a nonprofit dedicated to transformational cancer research, raised $4.1 million at its annual CURES Gala, “The Greatest Gateway.” Inspired by the Oscar-nominated film, *The Greatest Showman*, the event was held on Saturday, October 20, 2018 at the Sheraton Grand Chicago, 301 E North Water St, Chicago, IL and featured a night of unparalleled entertainment and surprises “under the big top.”

The event was presented and sponsored by [**Richard J Stephenson**](https://www.gatewaycr.org/about-gateway/richard-j-stephenson/), Founder and Chairman of [Cancer Treatment Centers of America](http://www.cancercenter.com/) (CTCA) and Gateway for Cancer Research and[**Dr. Stacie J. Stephenson**](https://www.gatewaycr.org/about-gateway/stacie-stephenson/)**,** CTCA Chairman of Functional Medicine and Director, Gateway for Cancer Research Board.

With more than 750 guests in attendance, actress and comedian Melissa Peterman, best known for her roles in the television comedy series *Reba* and *Baby Daddy,* emceed the night’s festivities beginning with a Broadway style performance by 11 year old, *America’s Got Talent*’s youngest finalist and Golden Buzzer winner,Angelica Hale and universal recording artist Fernando Varela, who has stunned audiences as a classic modern day tenor and has performed with some of the greatest voices of our time including Lionel Richie and Neil Diamond. Jonathan Cullen, who has wowed audiences as Elder Price in the first national tour of “The Book of Mormon” and a member of the Toronto Independent Music Awards nominated band, Silver Lining, gave a showstopping performance of a medley from *The Greatest Showman*, alongside *America’s Got Talent* finalist and Canadian Songwriters Award winner for Best Adult Contemporary/Pop Song 2018, Stacey Kay, who sang the Oscar-nominated song “This Is Me.” The London Essentials, a five-piece acoustic party band, continued the thrills, followed by performances from Pia Toscano, *American Idol* Finalist and star of the new Netflix show “Westside” debuting on November 9th; and electrifying pianist, recording artist and composer William Joseph who has shared the stage with such greats as Beyoncé, John Legend and Michael Bublé; with international virtuoso violinist Caroline Campbell, also known as the "violinist to the stars," who has appeared at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center and has performed duets with Andrea Bocelli, Sting and David Foster. R&B musical legend Brian McKnight took the stage and delivered a memorable performance before Montreal Rhapsody Orchestra drew the night to an end with an energetic, show-stopping grand finale.

“The Greatest Gateway” showcased breakthrough clinical cancer trials funded by Gateway, including Dr. Nathan Robison of Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles and his patient, Peighton Bailey. Dr. Robison is conducting a trial on low-grade gliomas and genetic mutations with childhood cancer. Using precision medicine, this multi-institutional trial studies the effects of MEK162, an inhibitor in tumor growth pathways. Peighton and her mom Jennifer shared her inspiring story, including the success of MEK162 in helping to shrink Peighton’s tumor and her dream to someday become a doctor and help other children facing cancer.

Guests indulged in a custom culinary experience created by premier chef Markus Ford, inspired by The Greatest Showman featuring ingredients known to aid and assist in the fight against cancer. The epicurean journey started with the Opening Act of “The Great Soup-er Salad,” a creamy butternut squash soup paired with chili roasted apple, autumn greens bouquet, cheese souffle with candied walnut; the Main Attraction featured “The Dynamic Duo,” smoked tournedo of beef along with its lovely assistant herb crusted wild sea bass, and sidekicks potato parsnip pear croquet and vegetable garni with twin sauces of limoncello and mustard seed; and ended with The Grand Finale of mocha gianduja terrene with a special appearance of bananas foster.

Live auction items encompassed incredible packages such as five exclusive nights in Bali at two properties – Capella UBUD and Ayana Resort and Spa. Silent auction items included Jordan/Pippen signed photograph and a Christmas stay at the Westin Kierland – Scottsdale. Individual tickets to the event were $1,000, and guests also had the opportunity to select higher level sponsorships.

Since its founding in 1991, Gateway for Cancer Research has funded more than 150 patient-focused clinical trials at renowned institutions worldwide. Proceeds from the event will support crucial Phase I and Phase II patient trials across all cancer types, including breast, blood, lung, brain, pancreatic and pediatric cancers.

**ABOUT GATEWAY FOR CANCER RESEARCH**

Gateway for Cancer Research℠ is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization committed to funding innovative cancer research that helps people living with cancer to feel better, live longer and conquer cancer TODAY! Thanks to generous underwriting, 99 cents of every dollar Gateway receives directly funds Phase I and Phase II cancer clinical trials at leading research institutions across the country and abroad. Since 1991, Gateway has supported more than 150 clinical trials and funded over $75 million in breakthrough cancer research. Get involved today by visiting [www.GatewayCR.org](http://www.GatewayCR.org), like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/demandcures](https://www.facebook.com/DemandCures/?ref=br_rs) and join the conversation on Twitter at [@DemandCures](https://twitter.com/DemandCures), #BeAGateway, #TheGreatestGateway.

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