



PHOENIX CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL CELEBRATES 25 YEARS, UNVEILS DETAILED EXPANSION PLANS

Today was "The Most Important Day" for Phoenix Children's Hospital. That was the theme at a community leaders' luncheon held at the Arizona Biltmore and attended by about 1,000 guests, who were treated to virtual tour through Arizona's only licensed children's hospital as they helped celebrate a quarter-century of service.

A stirring theatrical production performed by members of Phoenix Theatre brought guests into the heart of the Hospital for a typical day, told through the intertwining stories of three families served by Phoenix Children's over its 25-year history. After his story of multiple heart surgeries was depicted on stage, patient Jeremy Keck and his parents praised the Hospital staff for its love and care. "He was born with half a heart, and he wasn't expected to live past adolescence," said father Jeff Keck, with palpable emotion. "But the amazing medical team at Phoenix Children's Hospital wasn't going to pay attention to what was expected."

Jeremy himself made a special impact on the audience. Now nearly 25 years old himself, he has been a patient at Phoenix Children's Hospital from the beginning. "When I was born, 25-years ago, children with my type of heart defect weren't expected to survive. I can tell you first-hand how special Phoenix Children's is. Miracles happen there – thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon honored the Hospital for its 25 years of service to our community and encouraged guests to support the expansion as a way to continue making Phoenix a distinguished city.

Music played an important role in the program as well. A moving song, "Today is the Day," written exclusively for Phoenix Children's Hospital by Todd Schroeder and Kevin Fisher (songwriters for Rascal Flatts and other contemporary country artists), was performed by professional vocalist Wendy Heckmann. To close the luncheon, 11-year-old singing sensation Taylor Longbrake performed the song "Anyway."

Amidst this excitement, Phoenix Children's unveiled plans and renderings of a \$588 million multi-year expansion of its Thomas Road campus to serve what is projected to become one of the largest pediatric markets in the nation. Hospital President and CEO Bob Meyer introduced a video that dramatically depicts the Hospital rising to tower over the current campus. "In many ways this is the most exciting time for Phoenix Children's Hospital. The melding of talent and technology is making Arizona's only exclusively pediatric hospital one of the most respected in the country," Meyer noted.

The expansion will bring the total number of patient beds at the Hospital to 632 from 299 by 2012. As part of the project, the Hospital will build larger diagnostic, treatment and surgical facilities, spacious outpatient clinic areas, and a new main entrance and lobby to improve way finding.

Not only will the expansion allow the Hospital to provide world-class medical care to children in our community now and well into the future, it will also add 1,800 to 2,000 new jobs, most of them high-wage. In fact, Phoenix Children's Hospital is already an economic driver in this community, contributing an estimated \$164 million through its annual employee payroll and an estimated \$11.5 million last year in uncompensated care. In addition, the expansion will greatly improve a neighborhood targeted for redevelopment by the City of Phoenix.

Co-hosts of the luncheon, Mrs. Dan Quayle (Marilyn) and Mr. and Mrs. Greg Vogel (Julie), shared personal stories of their Phoenix Children's Hospital experience, emphasizing the event's theme that any given day can be the most important day to someone touched by Phoenix Children's Hospital.

But Meyer brought the theme home with his closing words:

"The 25th Anniversary of Phoenix Children's Hospital is more than a story of past achievements. It's a promise to the children and families of our community that the very best care available anywhere, is available in their own backyard. And it's a pledge that each and every child who needs it, will get that care."