

Written by Kyle Warren

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Photo of the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Annual Gala.

The Valley is only as good as the people who work to better it. And at the heart of the many notable, positive advancements and changes that we are witnessing around our state is St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. St. Jude has a reputation for being the leader in the way that the world understands and treats childhood cancer, as well as many other life-threatening illnesses.

Additionally, St. Jude has the world's best survival rates for some of the most aggressive childhood cancers, and treatments invented at St. Jude have helped push the overall childhood cancer survival rate from 20 percent to 80 percent since the facility opened more than 50 years ago.

While St. Jude has garnered a fair amount of recognition and praise for their tireless efforts to tackle the mysteries of cancer and to make the experience of battling this illness as easy on families as possible, they still have much bigger hopes for all that they can achieve looking towards the future. In fact, within the next decade, St. Jude is working to drive the overall survival rate for childhood cancer to 90 percent.

The company's mission is to ensure that families never receive a bill from St. Jude for treatment, travel, housing or food – because all a family should worry about is helping their child live.

One of St. Jude's efforts to raise awareness and funds to continue supporting the facility and its patients is the annual, "St. Jude Presents: A Night In the Crimson Tide" gala – an evening event that is designed to highlight a new destination each year, while bringing together Valley residents, philanthropists and humanitarians.

This "crimson cocktail" event will feature unique culinary experiences paired with signature cocktails, live and silent auctions, entertainment and special guest appearances.

Among those who will be in attendance are the two co-chairs for the evening – model, television personality and humanitarian Camerone Parker McCulloch, and Valley philanthropist Martha Martin.



Photo of Pat Bondurant.

Additionally, Pat Bondurant of Bondurant Racing, will receive the 2019 Letitia Frye Humanitarian Award. Bondurant is being recognized for her remarkable efforts in chairing, volunteering and donating her time and resources to help raise millions of dollars for hundreds of charities, including St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Recipients of the Letitia Frye Honorary Award are leaders in business and in the community, who dedicate their time, talent and/or treasure to children's health and wellness. The award was named after its first recipient, Letitia Frye, a philanthropist, "auctiontainer" and Valley native.

"This award represents every child, parent, doctor, researcher, staff member and dedicated donor whom I've had the privilege to know during my journey with St. Jude," says Frye. "Each of them has left an indelible impression upon my heart and it is my honor to present the award to someone who embodies the same qualities that make St. Jude such a wonderful organization."

Bondurant – whose undeniable impact and glorious presence around the Valley serves as a constant source of inspiration to so many – was so

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surprised and honored by the recognition from St. Jude, a hospital she has long-admired and loved working with.

"When I got the call that I was receiving the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital 2019 Letitia Frye Humanitarian Award, my heart was so moved and I said 'Me? Are you sure?'" says Bondurant. "Letitia called me herself and said that she selected me because for years she has seen my dedication to helping children everywhere of all walks of life."

"There is not a breathing person on earth who would not be moved by the hope that lives in the St Jude Children's Research Hospital. Every parent's face carries that look of hope when their doctor approaches them, the hope that today is their child's day to receive one of the many miracles that are performed in those amazing buildings," says Bondurant.

Proceeds from "A Night in the Crimson Tide" help St. Jude generate the lifesaving results for children and their families and ensure that St. Jude families never receive a bill for treatment, travel, housing or food.

This formal event will take place on Friday, April 5, at The Clayton House in Old Town Scottsdale.