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Heart of San Diego Raises Funds for UC San Diego Health Cardiovascular Care Feb. 20

19th annual gala to benefit the Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center at UC San Diego Health

UC San Diego will host its 19th annual Heart of San Diego Gala on Feb. 20 to raise funds for cardiovascular research and patient care to help give countless more patients second chances at life. Proceeds from the black-tie event at the Park Hyatt Aviara, in Carlsbad, will help UC San Diego Health usher in revolutionary new treatments, and continue excelling as a leader of cardiovascular care. The event will include a cocktail reception, dinner and dancing.

“The Heart of San Diego Gala provides critical funding to translate groundbreaking research discoveries into world-class, life-saving patient care,” said UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. “We are grateful to our donors who help ensure that UC San Diego can continue to provide the best in cardiovascular care to our patients who need it most.”

UC San Diego Health is the region’s only academic medical center to combine all heart- and vascular-related programs and services under one roof at the Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center. The center is ranked among the top 25 best hospitals in “Cardiology and Heart Surgery” by U.S. News and World Report, which is what drew patient Simon Keith to the center.

A former soccer player, Keith is the first athlete in the world to play professional sports after undergoing a heart transplant surgery. Since his surgery in 1986, Keith has become one of the longest living organ transplant recipients in the world. Despite living in Las Vegas, Keith travels to UC San Diego Health’s Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center for his ongoing care.



Simon Keith

“I wanted to find the best place for my care, and my surgeon recommended UC San Diego,” said Keith, who is now an author, motivational speaker and organ transplant advocate. “The first building block in life is health. For those of us who rely on the Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center, we are extremely grateful for access to this world-class facility and team.”

According to Keith, the team approach has been key when it comes to his care. “I get the benefits of the whole team at UC San Diego Health—not just the doctors, but also nurses, administrators and technicians. They are all progressive with their treatments and they allow me to advocate my thoughts. In short, they just ‘get it.’”

“At UC San Diego, specialists in cardiovascular medicine and surgery, along with experts in pulmonary medicine, collaborate with top researchers for a truly comprehensive approach to patient care and preventive medicine,” said Michael Madani, MD, director of the Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center – Surgery.

“We are so grateful to the friends and patients of the Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center who choose to give back to ensure that we can continue to provide excellent patient care and discover enhanced methods for treating and preventing cardiovascular disease,” said Ehtisham Mahmud, MD, director of the Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center – Medicine. “This annual event provides funding that allows us to continue to save lives.”

Cynthia and Timothy Wollaeger will serve as gala chairs. The Heart of San Diego Gala will begin Feb. 20 with cocktails at 6 p.m. and dinner at 7:30 p.m., followed by dancing to Wayne Foster Music and Entertainment. Attire is black-tie. Open to the public, tickets are \$600, with proceeds benefiting Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center at UC San Diego Health. Tables and sponsorship packages are also available.

For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit heartcentergala.org, call (858) 246-1571 or email heartofsd@ucsd.edu.

MEDIA CONTACT

Jade Griffin, 858-246-5418, cjgriffin@ucsd.edu

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