

**WELLNESS PLACE RAISES RECORD NUMBER AT 6TH ANNUAL GALA**

“Celebrate Under the Stars” was this year’s theme at the 6th Annual Wellness Place Gala Auction ...and that is just what took place. A celebration. The supportive energy in the room was electric. Supporters raised \$90,000 for the Wellness Place and the patients they serve.

The event was held on Friday, November 1st at the Pybus Events Center in Wenatchee. Founder and President Dr. Kjobech began the evening by introducing newly appointed Executive Director, Julie Lindholm and Administrative Assistant, Dodie Pike.

Lindholm began the evening with her own journey supporting her parents for 12 years in their battles with cancer, knowing all too well the struggles for the cancer patient, caregiver, family and friends. She shared that in 2018 Wellness Place provided over \$20,000 in gas cards to patients who needed assistance to get to treatment and quickly reminded everyone that this number was not enough. “One in three Americans will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime. We should be doubling or tripling that amount. We offer free support and services to cancer patients and survivors in four counties including Chelan, Douglas, Grant and Okanogan. As our cancer numbers increase so does the need for services.”

The evening grew in momentum and community as the 3rd Annual Legacy Award recipient was awarded posthumously honoring the memory of long time Wellness Place advocate and supporter, Suzie Kiesz. Suzie succumbed to breast cancer earlier this year. Suzie’s husband, Bob Kiesz accepted the award with a few of their children in the room to share in the evening.

Keynote speaker, Pam Brulotte, breast cancer survivor and co-owner of Icicle Brewing, shared her story of her breast cancer battle and her special relationship with the Wellness Place. Pam along with her long-time friend Shelly (owner of CLS Farms) are both breast cancer survivors and they recently collaborated and released the “1 in 8” Fresh Hop IPA, because 1 in 8 women will get breast cancer in their lifetime. Pam presented a check to Lindholm on behalf of Icicle Brewing from proceeds from their recent fundraiser.

Cody Hodge, Auctioneer and Cancer survivor ignited the room during the live auction where every paddle was raised during the Fund A Need. Community donations to raise needed funds were generous; from vacation homes in Mexico, Molokai, Hawaii, the Methow, Lake Chelan to a private dinners, wine tastings and even an epic KEGGAR in a local Cherry Orchard.

“When the number on the live tally board quickly surpassed our \$60,000 goal, I knew this was going to be a record breaking night!” said Lindholm.

Wellness Place, Board Vice President, Megan Kovanen shared "The support from the guests in the room and our community has been astounding...life changing. There was not a single person in the room that has not been touched by cancer. Survivor, caregiver, supporter and current cancer warriors battling this disease collectively raised our patients up in support. The generosity of our sponsors make us feel as if we are on the shoulders of giants our wish is to give that view of hope and support to the patients we serve.”

A standing ovation at the end of the evening was filled with cheers, gratitude and misty eyes. Attendee, Dr. Kevin Johnson shared "This was the first time my wife, DeLane and I have attended the Gala. The energy in the room was amazing. Wellness Place is a safe haven for those who are battling cancer in NCW and we were honored to share in the evening. We are looking forward to next year".

Save the date for next year’s event on Saturday, September 26th at the Wenatchee Convention Center.

*Wellness Place offers FREE support and services for cancer patients and survivors in Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan and Grant counties, and also offers FREE Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) classes to those 65 and older. For more information visit [www.wellnessplacewenatchee.org](http://www.wellnessplacewenatchee.org).*