

2009 Man & Woman of the Year Campaigns Raises More Than Ever

A record-breaking number of candidates enabled The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's (LLS) 2009 Man & Woman of the Year campaign to raise more money than ever in the history of the program. Final fundraising numbers are still being tabulated, but with 461 candidates from 54 cities, the participants raised more than \$7.7 million to support blood cancer research and patient services.

Out of those 461 candidates, one man, Dawson Grimsley, of Wichita, KS, and one woman, Ari H. Jones of Fair Oaks, VA., have emerged as the national winners of the Man & Woman of the Year competition for being the top fund raisers.

Grimsley, president and owner of Davis Moore-Auto Group in Wichita, raised \$186,426, during the 10-week program, through a combination of auctions and sending emails soliciting donations from more than 100,00 friends, family and business associates. One of Grimsley's employees, Renee Dusek-Higgins, whose sister is a leukemia survivor, was Woman of the Year for the Kansas Chapter in 2007, and she nominated Grimsley this year.

"If you have ever thought about getting involved and want to make a difference, LLS's Man & Woman of the Year is an excellent way to do so," said Grimsley. "It is an amazing ride and an excellent way to give back. My team and I were *relentless* just like all the men, women and children fighting these blood cancers. Together we can make difference!!!"

Jones, a metastatic thyroid cancer survivor, and mother of two, achieved her accomplishment of raising \$139,630 with the help of more than 40 other mothers, calling themselves "Moms for a Cure." They held a Rock 4 a Cure event, with live entertainment, silent auction and gift boutique. They held candy sales, and conducted massive letter-writing and email campaigns. And the Melting Pot, a national chain of fondue restaurants, donated 20% of sales to the cause.

"We were suburban moms looking for a way to impact the community," says Jones. "By joining forces, we were able to raise more than \$139,000 to improve the lives of cancer patients and their families through yard sales, letter writing, selling candy bars and networking to moms around the country. In 10 short weeks we were able to raise enough money to touch thousands of lives forever. What an extraordinary experience!"

Jones added that winning both the National Capital Area title and the national title in a difficult economic environment proves that a grassroots organization can really make a difference.

"LLS is greatly moved by the generosity and hard work of the candidates and campaign teams during the 2009 Man & Woman of the Year campaign," said Blaire Fogle, national manager of the Man & Woman of the Year campaign. "Nearly 500 Candidates proved that with passion and determination, unbelievable things are possible for our mission. They are true community leaders. Thank you does not even begin to express our gratitude for their efforts."