



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Debbie's Dream Foundation Prepares to Welcome More Than 200 Advocates at 13th Annual Stomach Cancer Capitol Hill Advocacy Day

DDF Marks Historic Growth in Legislative Efforts to Advance Stomach Cancer Awareness and Research

Fort Lauderdale, FL – February 23, 2025 – Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer (DDF) is proud to announce that more than 200 advocates—its largest group ever—will be participating in the 13th Annual Stomach Cancer Capitol Hill Advocacy Day, scheduled for February 23-25, 2025, in Washington, D.C.

Marking a significant milestone, the surge in attendance underscores the impact of DDF's efforts to elevate stomach cancer advocacy on a national level. Since hosting its first Advocacy Day in 2013 with fewer than 50 participants, DDF has united patients, caregivers, and survivors to share their stories and champion increased research funding, early detection initiatives, and policy changes that can save lives.

“Our exponential growth, from a handful of advocates to more than 200 strong, speaks to the dedication of this community,” said Andrea Eidelman, CEO of Debbie's Dream Foundation. “Now more than ever, it is critical that we raise our voices and ensure that stomach cancer remains at the forefront of public health conversations. Advocacy has the power to create real change, and we are so proud of the patients, caregivers, and families who are stepping up to make a difference.”

During this year's Advocacy Day, participants will meet with lawmakers to discuss the urgent need for increased stomach cancer research funding, improved screening guidelines, and comprehensive care for those affected by the disease. The event fosters dialogue, builds relationships with policymakers, and strengthens the push for legislative action.

Longtime DDF mentor, New Jersey chapter leader, and Board Secretary Melani Vincelli, who has been involved in the foundation's advocacy efforts since its early days, reflected on the organization's progress.

“I remember my first Hill Day in 2014 when Debbie gathered a small but determined group to share their personal stories with Congress. Today, seeing over 200 advocates ready to take action is nothing short of remarkable,” said Vincelli. “It's a testament to how far we've come and a powerful reminder of why we must keep fighting. Debbie's Dream Foundation has been a leader in advancing the stomach cancer movement, and this year's Advocacy Day proves that our voices are being heard.”

(More)

For more information on the 13th Annual Stomach Cancer Capitol Hill Advocacy Day or to learn how you can support DDF, please visit www.DebbiesDream.org/Advocacy.

About Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer

DDF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness about gastric cancer, advancing research funding, and providing international education and support to patients, families, and caregivers. DDF's ultimate goal is to make the cure for stomach cancer a reality.

DDF was founded in 2009 by Debbie Zelman after she was diagnosed with stage IV incurable gastric cancer in 2008 and given only weeks to live. Debbie is considered a pioneer by many for bringing awareness to the plight of stomach cancer patients worldwide, as well as to the lack of federal funding for stomach cancer research. She did all of this while receiving hundreds of rounds of chemo and daily oral treatments. Debbie passed away on December 23, 2017, at 50, almost a decade later. As a result of her leadership, DDF now has a Scientific and Medical Advisory Board of world-renowned doctors and chapters throughout the United States, and in Canada, Germany, and Japan. DDF strives to continue Debbie's mission to make her dream a reality. To learn more, visit www.DebbiesDream.org.

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