

STAR Gala Light the Night raises \$3.2 Million for STARability Foundation



STAR participant Matt M. speaks to almost 600 guests as STARability Vocational Services Manager Halley Kretschmer joins him on the stage.

The STAR Gala *Light the Night*, STARability Foundation's largest fundraising event of the year, set a new record as donors raised \$3.2 million to support programs for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Almost 600 guests attended the sold-out event on Feb. 12 at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, Naples.

An anonymous donor generously offered a \$1 million challenge match during the fund-a-need portion of the Gala. Guests met the challenge and matched the gift as auctioneer Rick Gallo called the record-setting event.

"We are overwhelmed by the generosity of everyone who supported the STAR Gala and who made this event so inspiring," said STARability CEO Karen Govern. "The Gala has reached new heights because of our dedicated co-chairs, Holly Shapiro and Jennifer Marchionda, and engaged committee members. The passion for our mission and the generosity that supporters and volunteers showed at the Gala will transform the lives of our STARS and their families. Thank you for helping our STARS reach for the stars."

Stacey Deffenbaugh of NBC2 News emceed the event, which also featured STARability participants in a dance number and a moving speech by a participant named Matt.

Sponsors making the night a success were: Accanito Capital Group (presenting sponsor), Waterside Shops, Stofft Cooney Architects, BCB Homes, Calusa Bay Design & Knauf-Koenig Group, Ken and Judy Gilman, Ralph and Tina Goldin, Neurology Office of Joseph Kandel, M.D. & Associates, Kurtz Homes Naples, Jeff and Maureen Maconaghy, The Law Offices of Marc L. Shapiro, P.A. & Aries Title and Structure Medical. Underwriters for the gala were: The Georgelos Family, Driftwood Garden Center, Newbury North Associates, Joe and Cynthia Beauchamp & The Williams Group and Gulf Coast International Properties.

STARability Foundation is a Collier County-based nonprofit with a mission of serving individuals with intellectual and developmental



Brennen Seaman and Sophia Matraxia with STAR Gala presenting sponsors Jana and Brent Seaman of Accanito Capital Group. MILA BRIDGER



Lisa Kahn-Allen, Board President of STARability Foundation, addresses guests at the Gala opening. MILA BRIDGER



Karen Govern, STARability CEO, welcomes to the 2022 STAR Gala. MILA BRIDGER

disabilities. With a professional staff and more than 100 volunteers, STARability delivers a full calendar of engaging, innovative and creative programs to ensure that participants, ages 14 to 70, can live their best lives. STARability Foundation exists to Support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities by providing life-transforming opportunities that emphasize Teamwork and connection to the community to build Awareness and Respect for their individual abilities.

To help support the work of STARability or learn more information about the nonprofit and its programs, please visit STARability.org or facebook.com/STARabilityFdn.



Carrie Cooney and Jennifer Haire celebrate an auction win. MILA BRIDGER



STAR Gala Co-Chairs Jennifer Marchionda and Holly Shapiro. MILA BRIDGER