

21st Annual Metro Detroit Heart Ball Raises Over \$2 million

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More than 80 companies joined together to raise \$2.1 million for cardiovascular research. The American Heart Association's 21st Annual Metropolitan Detroit Heart Ball, presented for the seventh year by General Motors, broke a national organization record on Saturday raising \$2 million for cardiovascular disease research. This is the second year in a row that the Metro Detroit Heart Ball raised \$2 million, making this event the largest in revenue generated out of the 250 American Heart Association Galas in 2008.

The Detroit Heart Ball was chaired by Brent Dewar, GM North America Vice President of Field Sales, Service, and Parts, and his wife Carolina Nakiri. The event drew 800 prominent business, medical and community leaders. More than 80 companies supported this year's event which focused on children's heart health.

"I want to thank all the individuals and sponsors who supported this year's Metro Detroit Heart Ball. We could not have raised over \$2 million without the support of all our sponsors, those who attended the event, and those dedicated people who donated their time and energy to plan the Heart Ball. All their contributions will result in more lives being saved in our community," said Brent Dewar.

Added Dewar, "GM believes that making a commitment to a heart-healthy lifestyle is the greatest defense in fighting heart disease. This is why we are so proud to support the American Heart Association."

During the Heart Ball, three physicians were recognized for their dedication to the American Heart Association. Dr. G. Michael Deeb received the Dewey Dodrill Award, Dr. W. Douglas Weaver received the Seymour Gordon Award, and Dr. Renato Ramos received the Physicians Award of Exemplary Service.

"I want to extend my congratulations and sincere gratitude to General Motors, Brent Dewar and Carolina Nakiri, and the entire Detroit Heart Ball committee. It takes great leadership and a dedicated and compassionate committee to be able to attain such tremendous results," said Cass Wheeler, chief executive officer of the American Heart Association.

The American Heart Association recently presented a national award to Ralph Szygenda, group vice president and chief information officer of General Motors Corporation World Headquarters in Detroit, Mich., and his wife Shelby, for their contribution to the 2007 Detroit Heart Ball. The Award of Meritorious Achievement recognizes individuals who have rendered important service in supporting the association's national programs. The award was presented at the association's 2008 "You're the Cure on the Hill" Awards Luncheon in Washington, D.C.

Mr. and Mrs. Szygenda are recognized for their leadership of association "Gala" fund-raising events. In 2007, they co-chaired the organization's first Gala to raise more than \$2 million, Detroit's 20th Annual Heart Ball. The couple was personally responsible for raising \$1.2 million for the event, which was sponsored by General Motors.

Platinum sponsors of the 2008 Metro Detroit Heart Ball were AT&T, Bearing Point, Capgemini Corporation, **The Cobalt Group**, EDS, Edmunds, Inc., Kelley Blue Book, SAP, and Siemens. Gold Sponsors were Aspen Marketing Systems, Compuware, Oracle, Toyota, and UAW GM Center for Human Resources. Silver sponsors included Beaumont Hospitals, Cisco Systems, Crain Communications, Dell, Digitas, EMC2, Emerald City, Designs, GMAC, GM Planworks, Hewlett Packard, Johnson Controls, Leo Burnett, and Magna International.

About the American Heart Association

Founded in 1924, the American Heart Association today is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary health organization dedicated to reducing disability and death from cardiovascular diseases and stroke. These diseases, America's No. 1 and No. 3 killers, claim more than 910,000 lives a year. In fiscal year 2004-05 the association invested over \$473 million in research, professional and public education, advocacy and community service programs to help all Americans live longer, healthier lives. To learn more, call 1-800-AHA-USA1 or visit americanheart.org.