Coaches vs. Cancer Announces 2019 Awards

Penn State's Pat Chambers, Youth Official Lou Levine and Hickory Christian Academy's Gary Bowne honored for their impact on the fight against cancer

ATLANTA, April 8, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Two coaches and a youth basketball official are being honored by the American Cancer Society for their work to fund the fight against cancer.

Penn State University head basketball coach Pat Chambers, Hickory Christian Academy's Gary Bowne and youth basketball official Lou Levine are the winners of this year's Champion Award, a prestigious national honor from the Coaches vs. Cancer program. This is the first time three people have won the award in the same year. Additionally, Mr. Levine is the first official to be recognized.

The Champion Award honors coaches who have shown extraordinary leadership and commitment to the American Cancer Society's mission of saving lives, celebrating lives and fighting cancer from every angle. The awards were presented during Final Four Weekend at the Guardians of the Game Awards Show in Minneapolis.

Coach Chambers has been actively involved in Coaches vs. Cancer since he joined Penn State in 2011, raising over $1.3 million during his tenure. He and his staff put on an annual golf tournament, Suits And Sneakers Week, the 3-Point Challenge, a campus 5K Walk/Run and a Coaches vs. Cancer Day, where sponsors attend a men's basketball game and receive recognition throughout the game. With Coach Chambers at the helm, Penn State has become a national leader in raising critical funds and awareness for Coaches vs. Cancer and the American Cancer Society

Coach Bowne has been involved with Coaches vs. Cancer for over two decades and has helped raised $200,000 as a high school coach. He serves as chair of the Coaches vs. Cancer Youth Council and has been instrumental in recruiting other high school coaches and supporters.

Since 2014, Lou Levine has raised over $500,000 for the American Cancer Society. He has donated over 1,600 basketball game fees which total over $100,000. In additional to his personal fundraising, he has been instrumental in the growth of the campaign through his outreach to coach and sporting official associations throughout the Northeast.

"The Champion Award is our opportunity to recognize true leaders in the fight against cancer," said Sharon Byers, chief development and marketing officer of the American Cancer Society. "Coach Chambers, Coach Bowne and Mr. Levine are an inspiration to their teams, their players and to us all. Their commitment and dedication are raising funds, awareness and rallying even more people to join our team and defeat cancer."

Coaches vs. Cancer is a collaboration between the American Cancer Society and the National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) that empowers coaches, their teams, and communities to join in saving more lives. The program leverages the personal experiences, community leadership, and professional excellence of basketball coaches nationwide to increase cancer awareness and promote healthy living through year-round awareness efforts, fundraising activities, and advocacy programs.

The Champion Award was instituted in 1996, with former Missouri Coach Norm Stewart receiving the inaugural honor. Since that time, the award has been presented to head coaches nationally including Jim Boeheim; Denny Crum; Roy Williams; Riley Wallace; Fran Dunphy; Gary Williams; Mark Few; Mike Brey; Bruce Weber; Jim Calhoun; Tom Izzo; Oliver Purnell; Paul Hewitt; Lon Kruger; Bo Ryan; Steve Lavin; Fran McCaffery; Frank Martin; Bill Self; Greg McDermott and Andrew Kettel.

For more information on the Coaches vs. Cancer program, visit coachesvscancer.org.

SOURCE American Cancer Society

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