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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **PANERA BREAD PARTNERS WITH THE CURE STARTS NOW**

*Local Panera franchise kick-starts multi-month fundraising campaign with a \$3,000 donation.*

[CINCINNATI] January 9, 2019 - Panera Bread's largest franchisee, Covelli Enterprises, is partnered with Cincinnati-based, The Cure Starts Now (CSN), this January and February in honor of Lauren Hill. The partnership will include fundraising through the bakery-cafes' Covelli Cares Community Bread Boxes in all Panera Bread locations for two months, and a Panera Mac & Cheese campaign in honor of Hill in February.

The Community Bread Box spare change canisters are located near registers in all 24 Panera Bread locations in the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky tristate area and will benefit CSN this January and February. Covelli Enterprises has graciously offered an additional company match of up to \$3,000 for all funds collected.

In addition, in honor of local hero and DIPG spokesperson, Lauren Hill, Panera will donate \$1 back to CSN for every Mac & Cheese sold February 18-24<sup>th</sup> at all local bakery-cafes. DIPG, short for Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma, is a form of pediatric brain cancer that CSN works tirelessly to eradicate. Before her passing in 2015, Hill raised in upwards of \$2 million for CSN in the name of all the "voiceless children" this horrible disease takes, all the while fighting her own battle. And, Panera Bread in Cincinnati made her last days just a tiny bit more tolerable with its Vermont White Cheddar Mac.

"Panera Mac & Cheese was one of the only foods Lauren craved in the late days of her battle that her body could also still tolerate," explains Lisa Hill, Lauren's mother, who also now works full-time for CSN. "The Colerain Panera made it possible for Cincinnati Children's Hospital to get Panera Mac in bulk so Lauren could have one of her favorites on-demand. She would be so proud of this campaign with Panera!"

The current two-month CSN partnership isn't the first time Covelli's Cincinnati Panera market has joined forces with the non-profit. The local franchise raised funds for CSN in 2017 through its Community Bread Box initiative, and were a part of Mount St. Joseph University's TippOff event in honor of what would have been Hill's senior year as a basketball player for the college.

"It is a privilege to partner with The Cure Starts Now in honor of Lauren Hill, who was far stronger than most of us will ever be," said Sam Covelli, Owner / CEO of Covelli Enterprises. "Her brave fight against this terrible disease brought a voice to the hundreds of children impacted annually by DIPG. Fundraising in our bakery-cafes for two months, and selling some Mac this February is something we are proud to execute in her honor across all 24 Panera locations in the Tristate!"

Customers can drop their loose change in any Panera Community Bread Box throughout Cincinnati or Northern Kentucky this January and February, and help *Mac a Difference* February 18-24<sup>th</sup> by purchasing Panera Mac & Cheese.

#### **About Covelli Enterprises**

Covelli Enterprises operates more than 315 Panera Bread bakery-cafes in eight states. Headquartered in Warren, Ohio, Covelli Enterprises is the single largest franchisee of Panera Bread, LLC. In 2017, Covelli Enterprises donated more than \$32 million to hunger relief agencies and non-profit organizations. [www.covelli.com](http://www.covelli.com)

#### **About The Cure Starts Now**

The Cure Starts Now is one of the only cancer foundations dedicated to finding the Homerun Cure for cancer by focusing on one of the rarest, most aggressive forms of cancer. Believing in more than just awareness, The Cure Starts Now has funded over \$12.5 million in cancer research, resulting in over 80 cutting edge research grants in 6 countries since 2007. [www.thecurestartsnow.org](http://www.thecurestartsnow.org)