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PANERA BREAD AND THE CURE STARTS NOW 'MAC A DIFFERENCE' THIS FEBRUARY

Local Panera franchise honors Lauren Hill's legacy through one of her favorite dishes.

[CINCINNATI] February 10, 2020 - Panera Bread's largest franchisee, Covelli Enterprises, is partnered with Cincinnati-based, The Cure Starts Now (CSN), again this January and February in honor of Lauren Hill. The partnership not only includes a Panera Mac & Cheese give-back campaign in honor of Hill this February 17-23rd, but a two-month citywide fundraising campaign through the bakery-cafes' Covelli Cares Community Bread Boxes. Last year, the combination of the Mac & Cheese give-back campaign and register coin box fundraiser produced a donation of nearly \$25,000 to The Cure in honor of Hill.

During 'Mac A Difference' week at Panera, February 17-23rd, all 28-area Panera bakery-cafes will donate \$1 back to CSN for every Mac & Cheese sold to support Hill's legacy. Hill became a local hero during her battle with Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG), 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.

"We would stop at Panera frequently on our way to and from Cincinnati Children's Hospital. And, then when the hospital became our home those last nine weeks, Panera stepped up to help us," explains Lisa Hill, Lauren's mother. "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, and the Colerain Panera made it possible for Cincinnati Children's 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 Mac give-back also translates to Panera's catered Group Mac & Cheese product. For every Group Mac in a quart sold during campaign week, Panera will donate \$4 back to the cause.

Customers can also support CSN in Hill's honor through the restaurant's Community Bread Box spare change canisters located near registers in all 28 Panera Bread locations in the tristate area through the end of February.

"Lauren Hill was a force to be reckoned with during her time here on earth," said Sam Covelli, Owner / CEO of Covelli Enterprises. "It's humbling that Covelli Enterprises and Panera can be a part of carrying on her legacy here in the Cincinnati community through this partnership with The Cure Starts Now."

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 2018, Covelli Enterprises donated more than \$32 million to hunger relief agencies and non-profit organizations. 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