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AMERICAN TRANSPLANT FOUNDATION LAUNCHES YOUNG PROFESSIONALS GROUP, THE “TRANSPLANT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL,” WITH EVENT AT THE JET HOTEL

(DENVER, COLO.)—The American Transplant Foundation celebrated the launch of its new young professionals group, the Transplant Leadership Council (TLC), with a party at The Jet Hotel in downtown Denver, Colorado on June 28, 2011. More than 40 young professionals and supporters attended to learn more about the Council, which provides emergency financial assistance for transplant patients in need.

During the cocktail party, guests heard remarks from Steve Farber, kidney recipient and founder of the American Transplant Foundation, Brian Cerise, a living kidney donor and TLC member, and Brad Farber and Susan Fakharzadeh, two of the Transplant Leadership Council’s Founding Co-Chairs, about how their lives have been touched by organ and tissue donation and how the Council will directly benefit patients.

Young professionals in the Transplant Leadership Council share their time, talent and treasure to support the American Transplant Foundation, specifically by donating, raising money and planning events to fund the Patient Assistance Program. The program provides emergency financial assistance to transplant patients by providing small, one-time grants of \$500 or less for transplant candidates, transplant recipients or living donors who need help paying for medical costs, living expenses and other transplant-related expenditures.

Though medical insurance covers the majority of transplant expenses for the patient—with first-year expenses alone often costing between \$500,000 or more—many costs such as time away from work, travel and co-pays can add up. The American Transplant Foundation created the Patient Assistance Program in 2009 to aid in covering some of these additional costs for eligible patients.

During the kick off party, Founding Co-Chair Susan Fakharzadeh remarked, “Since launching the Transplant Leadership Council in April, we have not had to deny any requests for assistance. I love that we are a group that is able to say “yes” so often to the patients who are in need of help and to give them some peace of mind for at least one of their bills.”

“TLC gives individuals the opportunity to review grant applications and make funding decisions, thus knowing exactly how their donations and fundraising are making a difference in the lives of real transplant patients,” said Anastasia Darwish, the American Transplant Foundation’s executive director. “We are incredibly grateful for the support we have received so far. With

funds pledged by the Council this year, we will be able to fulfill at least 30 grants to help 30 different patients. This is in addition to money already set aside for the program.”

To date, 23 individuals have signed on as Founding Members of the Transplant Leadership Council, pledging to raise more than \$15,000 for the Patient Assistance Program in 2011. TLC members’ involvement will help to grow the program so that more patients can receive assistance.

Fakhzadeh added, “Every transplant story is unique; the needs of those waiting or who have recently received a transplant do not affect one demographic; it can and does affect everyone in the community. The ability to dramatically and positively impact the lives of those individuals is very tangible for members of the Council.”

About the American Transplant Foundation

Founded in 2005 by Denver attorney Steve Farber, the American Transplant Foundation is a national nonprofit organization that works to increase the donation of organs and tissue in order to reduce the growing list of men, women and children who are awaiting a lifesaving transplant.

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About the Transplant Leadership Council

The Transplant Leadership Council is a dynamic group of emerging young leaders who assist the American Transplant Foundation in the mission to reduce the growing list of men, women and children who are awaiting a lifesaving transplant. The vision of TLC is to create a powerful leadership network of young professionals in the Denver-metro area and beyond who support the lifesaving mission of the American Transplant Foundation through investments of their time, talent, and treasure. TLC is led by Founding Co-Chairs Susan Fakhzadeh, Brad Farber and Matthew Travis Tanner.

<http://www.americantransplantfoundation.org/programs/current-programs/#PatientAssistance>

About the Patient Assistance Program

In January 2009, the American Transplant Foundation unveiled the Patient Assistance Program. Funded exclusively through donations made in honor and in memory of loved ones and funds raised by the Transplant Leadership Council, these monies are earmarked to provide one-time financial assistance to transplant patients on a case-by-case basis. By working closely with transplant centers, the Foundation takes case referrals and requests and, based upon funds availability and patient eligibility, provides assistance to those most in need. Requests must come from social workers at transplant centers who are members of the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), the private, nonprofit organization that manages the nation's organ transplant system under contract with the federal government. Funds are dispersed to the third-party vendor involved, such as the insurance provider, not directly to the patient.

<http://www.americantransplantfoundation.org/how-to-help/transplant-leadership-council/>

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