



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ABILITYFIRST 43RD ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF FALL TO BENEFIT INDIVIDUALS
WITH DISABILITIES ON SUNDAY OCTOBER 15**

Gourmet Food and Wine Event will be held at historic Laurabelle A. Robinson House in Pasadena

(Pasadena – September 18, 2017) On Sunday October 15 from 4-7pm on the grounds of the majestic and historic Laurabelle A. Robinson estate in Pasadena, AbilityFirst will hold its 43rd annual Festival of Fall Gourmet Food and Wine Event. This year's emcee will be a familiar face to thousands, Jeff Michael, co-host on CBS2 News This Morning.

The event has become a destination for foodies and wine connoisseurs and benefits the AbilityFirst Lawrence L. Frank Center located in Pasadena. Since 1968 this center has provided individuals with developmental disabilities programs to help them reach their personal best, including after school, adult day, and social recreation to help to build social connections, gain valuable life skills and promote independent living.

Now in its 43rd year, the Festival of Fall Gourmet Food and Drink event offers guests the chance to sample exquisite cuisine prepared by more than 30 prominent greater Pasadena restaurants, including Ruth's Chris Steakhouse, Sushi Roku and Gale's Restaurant, sip wine from Loring Winery and San Antonio Winery and enjoy craft beers and signature cocktails from local purveyor The Raymond Restaurant. The evening will also feature live and silent auctions such as a two-night stay and private tastings in Sonoma Wine Country, a trip for two to Diamond Resort in Nuevo Vallarta and a private helicopter ride along sponsored by the Pasadena Police Department.

The 2017 AbilityFirst Gourmet Food and Wine Event is hosted by Phaedra and Mark Ledbetter, who have generously donated the use of their spectacular home overlooking the Arroyo Seco. Rarely open to the public, the Laurabelle A. Robinson estate was commissioned in 1905 by lawyer and financier Hentry Robinson and his wife, Laurabelle and was designed by architects Greene and Greene.

This year's Festival of Fall Steering Committee is chaired by Greg Wood and led by Pasadena area residents and business leaders, Amit Patel, Cynthia Amerio, Gale Kohl, Jacqueline Kibler, Joe Longo, Kris Bacani, Mark Fedde, Michael Hawkins, Paige R. Parrish, Samuel McRoberts and Todd Johnson.

Top sponsors include HomeStreet Bank, Longo Toyota-Lexus and Wells Fargo, along with Alison & Harlan Thompson, Beverly Hills Rotary Club, Bolton & Co, Green Hasson Janks, Jennifer and John Kelly, Kaiser Permanente, Lawry's Restaurants, Inc., Mary and Bill Urquhart, RSM, The Longo Family, Universal Discover a Star Foundation, Wendy Lees and Tom Boyle, Comerica Bank, Commonwealth Business Bank, Fedde Furniture, Kevin Chase Executive Search Group, LATHER, Pasadena Tournament of Roses with media sponsors CBS2, Outlook Newspapers and Pasadena Now.

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About AbilityFirst

AbilityFirst pioneered some of the first community services in California for children with disabilities. Highlights from our 90+ year history include: setting a model standard in accessibility with the design and construction of one of the first fully accessible camps in the nation; opening one of the first vocational training programs in the country for adults with disabilities; being a forerunner in supported employment, helping adults with developmental disabilities succeed in competitive community jobs; and leading a statewide effort to sponsor and secure passage of Senate Bill 309 which ensures that young adults with developmental disabilities can attend after school programs throughout high school. At AbilityFirst, we look beyond disabilities, focus on capabilities and expand possibilities. For more information, visit us online at AbilityFirst.org