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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local celebrities help raise more than \$45,000 to support Healthy Start

Stuart, FL - On September 22, more than 400 people filled the seats of the historic Lyric Theatre in downtown Stuart to watch local celebrities participate in the 2nd annual Dancing with the Martin Stars event hosted by the Martin County Healthy Start Coalition.

Stars that took the stage this year were: Jade Smith of Island Party Rentals; Marilyn Leeds of Lake Okeechobee Rural Health Systems; Eve Samples of Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers; Ed Lippisch of Lippisch and Engebretsen Oral Surgery and Dental Implants; and Tom Hall from Seacoast National Bank.

After months of practicing and learning the steps for dances such as the Paso Doble and the Cha Cha, it was time for the celebrities to showcase their talents to the crowd and judges. The audience was full of energy and excitement, some even holding up signs in support of their favorite dancers. The dancers fed off of the buzz of the crowd and gave it their all while trying to make an impression on the judges with their moves and their flashy, sparkling costumes. This year judges for the event were professional dancers Elena Simonova and Joe Wynes and Dancing with the Martin Stars alum, Stephen Leighton. For this event, the grand prize winner was the pair that received the highest overall score by combining their fundraising amount with their dance score.

After wowing the crowd and judges with flawless footwork during their Argentine Tango, Scripps Newspaper Columnist, Eve Samples, and her partner Bob Murray, were awarded the highest overall dance score of the night. They receive perfect scores from all three judges and their score combined with Samples' fundraising efforts, resulted in the duo taking home the coveted mirrorball trophy.

Tom Hall, Executive Vice President at Seacoast National Bank, took home a trophy as well for being the highest fundraiser of the evening bringing in more than \$16,000. He and his partner, Valorie Pari, impressed the judges by dancing the Swango – a hybrid of the Swing and the Tango – and earned a score of 26. This is the first year that two celebrity dancers were able to raise over \$10,000 each. Dr. Ed Lippich of Lippisch and Engebretsen Oral Surgery and Dental Implants helped raise over \$12,000 for the organization.

Event attendees also had the special opportunity to see Spotlight Dances by world-renowned professional dancers throughout the night. Pairs for the Spotlight Dances were Kamilla Umaralieva and Lukas Klotzsche, Elena Simonova and Yusuf Mihaylov, and Thany Lim and Jose DeCamps. DeCamps is an award winning dancer and was once partners with ABC's Dancing with the Stars winner, Cheryl Burke.

One hundred percent of the funds raised will be used to pay for services and programs offered by the Martin County Healthy Start Coalition such as ultrasounds, lab testing and provide high-risk mothers with the specialized care they need.

About Martin County Healthy Start Coalition

Martin County Healthy Start Coalition is a community-based 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization that offers support and education to pregnant women and infants. Prenatal and infant health screenings, childbirth education, counseling services, and parenting education classes are available to families to ensure that all babies are born healthy. All information provided to Healthy Start is kept confidential. Eligibility for services is based on the presence of risk to the health of the mother or infant, not on income level.

Connect with Martin County Healthy Start on Facebook at www.facebook.com/MCHHealthyStart.

For more information, call 772-463-2888 or visit <http://www.mchealthystart.org>.

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Photo Identifications:

DWMS 1 – Lukas Klotzsche & Jade Smith enjoy the pre-event cocktail hour.

DWMS 2 – Celebrity dancers Marilyn Leeds & Tom Hall pose for a photo before the event.

DWMS 3 – Ed Lippisch and his partner Megan Acosta danced the Samba.

DWMS 4 – Ed Lippisch and Megan Acosta hoped to receive perfect 10s for their performance.

DWMS 5 – Eve Samples and Bob Murray wowed the crowd with their Argentine Tango.

DWMS 6 – Jade Smith and partner Lukas Klotzsche danced the ChaCha.

DWMS 7 – Tom Hall and his partner Valorie Pari take the stage for the awards presentation.

DWMS 8 – Steve Wilkie and his “star” partner Marilyn Leed discuss scores with the emcee of the evening, Hamp Elliott.

DWMS Winners – Bob Murray and his partner, Eve Samples hold up their trophies to celebrate their win.

DWMS Group – (L to R) Eve Samples, Bob Murray, Megan Acosta, Ed Lippisch, Marilyn Leeds, Steve Wilkie, Jade Smith, Lukas Klotzsche, Tom Hall and Valorie Pari.

DWMS Judges – (L to R) Joe Wynes, Elena Simonova and Stephen Leighton.