



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **To Benefit U.S. Veterans, Spine Foundation Hosts February Weekend of Education, Fun & Fundraising**

**Jupiter, FL**—U.S. veterans will get a much-needed boost from an educational, fun, and inspirational weekend designed to raise awareness and funding for research into spine disability. All proceeds raised from the events will be used to fund a ground-breaking research collaboration of the North American Spine Foundation, the RAND Corporation and the National Association of Veteran-Serving Organizations.

“Grueling training, heavy body armor, IED explosions, psychological trauma and extended and repeated tours of duty take a far greater toll on the spines of our armed forces than the public knows,” said Michael Reed, executive director of the North American Spine Foundation. “When our veterans return home, their debilitating spinal disorders and pain do not stay behind—they negatively impact the veterans’ everyday lives. In many cases, the functional challenges and pain disrupt their family life and careers, putting significant social and economic strains on our nation.”

The February 5 and 6 events, which include a [Biologics Course](#), cocktail reception, [Golf Tournament](#) and [the Second Annual "Flips Flops & Bow Ties" Gala](#), are expected to raise more than \$125,000 for research into veterans’ spine disability.

Veteran advocates agree that an important first step is to determine the scope of this growing issue. “By funding and conducting quality research into the prevalence, prevention, diagnosis and physical and psychological treatment of debilitating back pain in our nation’s veterans, our nation can create a healthier and more effective military force,” said Christopher Ford, retired Air Force veteran and chief executive officer of the National Association of Veteran-Serving Organizations. “Most importantly, we can improve the likelihood of a veteran’s successful integration back into the community by ensuring the negative consequence of their spine disorder are rare, brief and nonrecurring.”

*(more)*

#### **~~A Weekend to Remember Schedule~~**

##### **Friday February 5**

- 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Biologics in Spine Summit
- 6:00 p.m. VIP Cocktail Reception

##### **Saturday February 6**

- 10:00 a.m. Golf Tournament
- 6:30 p.m. “Flip Flops & Bow Ties” Gala and “Spine Ability Heroes” awards presentation

*All events will be held at the world-famous PGA National Resort & Spa in Palm Beach Gardens, FL*

*For more information on sponsorship, advertising and registration, visit [www.spine.foundation](http://www.spine.foundation).*

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More than 400 guests including local and national business leaders, politicians, spine specialists, medical professionals and philanthropists are expected to attend this gala weekend event. During the February 6 gala, “Spine Ability Hero” awards will be presented to two inspirational U.S. veterans who demonstrate the potential of every veteran and who are making a meaningful difference in the world.

The weekend’s Biologics Summit will be chaired by Wellington K. Hsu, MD, professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago. Faculty for this summit are renowned experts in the spine specialty field and are coming from all over North America to share their knowledge and experiences with stem cells, growth factors, and other novel therapies.

The chair of the Gala Golf Tournament is Matt Harris, MD, MBA, who is the founder and director of the Joint Preservation and Limb Reconstruction Center in Jupiter, FL. The Golf Tournament Committee includes: Gigi Melcher, Zach Miner, Nancy Paton, Rebecca Seelig, Risa Voorhees and Dr. Robert Voorhees. Golfers will have rare opportunity to play the famed PGA National Champion Course just two weeks prior to its hosting of the PGA Tour’s Honda Classic.

The Second Annual “Flip Flops & Bow Ties” Gala is chaired by Dr. David and Mrs. Rachel Campbell, Dr. Ray and Mrs. Sheena Golish and Dr. Michael and Mrs. Chelsea Reed. The 2016 Host Committee is comprised of: Andrea Albertini, Dr. Bret Baynham, Eve Beres, Jo-Jo Brockman, Dr. Marc Brockman, Dr. Chin Chen, Jill Colt, Carol Conduff, Teresa Dabrowski, Dr. Catherine G. Drourr, Dr. Nat Drourr, Angela Grispino Balasis, Adrianna Harris, Dr. Matt Harris, Dr. Shawna Flanagan, Lisa Keiser, Todd Keiser, Wendy Kneebone, Lisa Lickstein, Dr. David Lickstein, Dr. Amir Lubarsky, Tish Luka, Jay Luka, Gigi Melcher, Dr. Linda Pao, Nancy Paton, Lee Paton, Kim Pruitt, Ami Reece, Linda Robb, George Robb, Dr. Mark Rubenstein, Jessi Rubenstein, Rebecca Seelig, Amy Singer, Michael Singer, Risa Voorhees and Dr. Robert Voorhees.

Gala Weekend sponsors include: K2M, Florida Spine Center, Boston Private Wealth, DePuy Synthes, Paradigm Spine, Gulfstream Outsourcing, NASS, Stryker East Florida Spine, Coastal Surgical, Palm Beach Children's Hospital at St. Mary's Medical Center, Medstar Home Health, Medical Weight Loss of Jupiter, Concierge Medicine of Jupiter, Visiting Angels, Dignity Home Healthcare Services, The Gardens Mall, Options Home Health, Beres Design Group, Luka Media Production, Horizon Home Care Services, Fitness Redefined, Falk Orthotics & Prosthetics, Dr. Craig Lichtblau, Genesis Dermatology, EZ Tees, GoCravy, Dr. Ken Grey, Pinsky & Lickstein, Captiva Spine and Centinel Spine—Florida.

*While musculoskeletal disorders affect billions around the world, causing suffering at all levels of society, few people are aware of the #1 cause of global disability: spinal impairment. The vision and mission of the North American Spine Foundation is to end spine-related disability by sponsoring research, education and advocacy to end spine-related disability. The Spine Foundation, a division of the North American Spine Society, is dedicated to educating every person, of all ages and countries of origin, about the global suffering associated with spinal disorders. By raising awareness and inspiring action at all levels, we can significantly increase efforts to find solutions to end spine-related disability. Learn more at [www.spine.foundation](http://www.spine.foundation).*

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