



The Late Craig Sager and SagerStrong Foundation Honored by MD Anderson Cancer Center for Contributions to End Cancer

ATLANTA, GA - Feb 9, 2021 – Broadcasters and cancer survivors Robin Roberts and Ernie Johnson as well as NBA great Charles Barkley paid tribute to their friend and fellow broadcaster, the late Craig Sager and the SagerStrong Foundation as part of The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center's *A Conversation with a Living Legend®* virtual event on Feb. 4. This year's event awarded Craig (posthumously), his wife Stacy, and the SagerStrong Foundation with the *Making Cancer History®* award for their Foundation work and financial contributions to raising funds for blood cancer research to help #EndCancer. The Award was established in 2007 to recognize visionaries who are committed to MD Anderson's mission to end cancer. Stacy Sager accepted the award on behalf of her husband Craig and the SagerStrong Foundation. Craig Sager was an iconic broadcaster, legendary Basketball Hall of Fame member and Emmy Award winner, who died in 2016 after he was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia (AML), a cancer of the blood and bone marrow, two years earlier.

"It is an honor to have such inspiring cancer survivors share their stories on behalf of MD Anderson and our mission to end cancer," said [Peter WT Pisters, M.D.](#), president, MD Anderson. "The opportunity to honor Craig and Stacy Sager and the SagerStrong Foundation for their trailblazing efforts, as well as the chance to hear from such legends as Robin, Ernie and Charles, is a true privilege. And with the support of our committed friends and their generous gifts, our researchers will be able to continue their dedicated work to improve outcomes for cancer patients all over the world."

Robin Roberts, an anchor of "Good Morning America," joined Emmy Award-winning sportscaster Ernie Johnson Jr. virtually for an intimate and heartfelt conversation to remember Craig, and his courageous battle with acute myeloid leukemia (AML), while telling their own inspirational stories of surviving cancer. Both Robin and Ernie recounting how faith, family, friends, and the extraordinary compassion of the healthcare workers they encountered each day lifted their spirits to fight another day. Charles Barkley made a guest appearance to also remember and honor Craig for his amazing courage and bravery.

To date, this year's event raised \$1.2 million, and all proceeds support blood cancer research at MD Anderson. MD Anderson's *A Conversation with a Living Legend®* series began in North Texas. The interview concept has inspired similar events in Las Vegas, Nevada; Atlanta, Georgia; Washington, D.C.; and Houston, San Antonio and Corpus Christi, Texas, raising more than \$46 million for cancer research and patient programs at MD Anderson.

Background for the All-Star Lineup

An anchor of ABC's "Good Morning America," Robin Roberts is a breast cancer survivor who was inducted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in 2012 and received the Arthur Ashe Courage Award in 2013. She famously shared her journey with myelodysplastic syndrome, a malignancy of the bone marrow, with the nation in October 2012. The NBA awarded Roberts the Sager Strong Award in 2019 after her story inspired hundreds of potential bone marrow donors to register and heightened awareness about a rare type of cancer.

Ernie Johnson Jr. is an Emmy Award-winning sportscaster for Turner Sports, lead television voice for Major League Baseball and host of NBA coverage on Turner Network Television (TNT). In 2003, Johnson was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, a type of cancer found in the lymphatic system. He dealt with his diagnosis privately until he announced his cancer in 2006. Johnson also is a prostate cancer survivor. He has since bravely shared his story with audiences across the U.S. As a cancer survivor and basketball enthusiast, Johnson had a unique bond with Sager. The touching eulogy he gave at his friend's funeral reflected his understanding of the difficult toll that cancer treatment can take.



Craig Sager was diagnosed with AML in 2014. While undergoing treatment at MD Anderson, Sager carried on with his motto of “living out loud,” with his wife, Stacy, by his side. In 2016, Sager gave an unforgettable speech while accepting the Jimmy V Award for Perseverance at the ESPYs, and, shortly after his passing that same year, he was inducted into the Sports Broadcasting Hall of Fame. In 2017, TNT launched the Sager Strong Award at the annual NBA Awards show to honor a trailblazing individual who exemplifies courage, faith, compassion and grace. Craig and Stacy Sager established the SagerStrong Foundation to continue Craig’s legacy to help #endcancer one day.

About the SAGERSTRONG Foundation

The SAGERSTRONG Foundation was founded in 2016 by former Turner Sports Reporter and Personality Craig Sager and his wife Stacy, to fund and support blood cancer research and trials, so that one day, leukemia patients and their families will not have to go through the battle they endured. The Foundation has raised close to 1.3 million dollars to help fund blood cancer research, including two clinical trials at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. These important trials support Dr. Naveen Pemmaraju's (Craig's doctor) research with current Myelofibrosis patients and patients with Advanced Myeloproliferative Neoplasms. For an update on Dr. Pemmaraju’s research, please [click here](#). The SagerStrong Foundation has also funded a grant with the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society to support the Beat AML Master Trial. The SagerStrong Foundation entered into a two, year, cutting-edge research project grant with the V Foundation for Cancer Research in 2019. The partnership awarded a V Scholar Grant to Dr. Ami Bhatt for her research project titled, “Precisely Shaping the Intestinal Microbiome to Improve Cancer Therapy Outcomes.” Bhatt’s research, in the partnership’s name, is exploring how dietary changes might improve the intestinal environment in cancer patients. For more information on Dr. Bhatt’s research, [click here](#). Your support helps us get closer to one day finding a cure for blood cancer! For additional information on the #SagerStrong Foundation and events, or to make a donation to support this important work, please visit sagerstrongfoundation.org.

###

Media Contacts:

Terri Grunduski, SagerStrong Foundation	terri@grunduskigroup.com	404-226-7497
Donna Feazell, SagerStrong Foundation	donna@grunduskigroup.com	404-290-1929