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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**RACHEL AND JEFF BAGWELL JOIN BEVERLY AND TOM FRITSCH AS CO-CHAIRS OF SUCCESSFUL 2<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL CHAMPIONS FOR RECOVERY BREAKFAST ON APRIL 4<sup>TH</sup>**

In Support of **Palmer Drug Abuse Program (PDAP)**

[Houston, Texas] **Rachel** and **Jeff Bagwell** and **Beverly** and **Tom Fritsch** co-chaired PDAP's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Champions for Recovery Breakfast on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019, at the Junior League of Houston. The event featured PDAP alumnus **Ben Carnes** as Guest Speaker. **Reverend Liz Parker**, Associate Rector at Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church, led the Invocation.

Held in the Junior League Ballroom, this year's event hosted over 150 attendees; in addition to the **Bagwell** and **Fritsch** couples, the audience of PDAP supporters and guests included former Breakfast co-chairs **Scott Basinger** and **Anette Edens**, **Tom Brown** of the Hamill Foundation, **the Honorable Bonnie C. Hellums**, **George Joseph** of Positive Recovery Centers, **Mel Taylor** of The Council on Recovery, and **Constance White** of Spindletop Charities. Now in its second year, PDAP's youngest fundraising event raised close to \$70,000, thanks to the generosity of its underwriters and donors.

The Breakfast program began with PDAP Board Chair **Drew Baker** and Executive Director **Beth Eversole** sharing, in turn, their unique perspectives on PDAP's unwavering commitment to its mission of providing prevention and recovery services for teens and young adults affected by substance abuse, and their families. Referring to PDAP's rich, 50-year legacy as the nation's pioneer Alternative Peer Group (APG), **Eversole** highlighted the agency's dynamism, growth, and expanding partnerships in the community and its current strategic focus on reaching more young people in need, throughout the region.

In his inspiring keynote speech, PDAP alumnus **Ben Carnes** shared his central message, "PDAP saved my life." **Carnes**, now a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor - Intern (LCDC-I), spoke poignantly of his teenage substance abuse, his introduction to PDAP, and the unexpected, unconditional acceptance and love he found there among supportive peers and the program staff. He shared how PDAP inspired him to "pay it forward" through a career path dedicated to helping today's youth find lasting recovery in a similarly loving and supportive context.

Event co-chair **Jeff Bagwell** took to the podium to emphasize the urgent and ongoing need to fight stigma, and the importance of helping the entire family access the loving support and services that they need before the consequences of drug and alcohol use turn tragic. **Bagwell's** words carried hope, in the mission of PDAP and in the miracle of recovery as witnessed in its teen and young adult participants. Co-chair **Tom Fritsch** spoke to PDAP's lifesaving role in our community in light of the growing risks that all our children face, and the community's key role in helping PDAP adhere to its founding principle: that recovery belongs to everyone, and no one who is suffering should have to choose between their finances and the support they need to find and maintain a healthy, productive, substance-free life.

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