

For immediate release

THIRD ANNUAL "WALK FOR THOMAS" PLANNED FOR SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2013 TO RAISE AWARENESS FOR NEUROBLASTOMA RESEARCH

Calgary, AB – October 15, 2013 – Neuroblastoma is a rare form of cancer that usually occurs in children under the age of 5 and accounts for 15% of all pediatric cancer-related deaths. Neuroblastoma occurs when tumours develop in embryonic cells, which are known as neuroblasts. It is a cancer that personally affects many Canadian families including that of Philip Mueller and Dianne Wilkins, CEO of [Critical Mass, a global digital marketing agency headquartered in Calgary](#). Their son, Thomas fought courageously but tragically passed at the age of 7 on September 30, 2011 from neuroblastoma.

Family and friends organized the first annual Walk for Thomas to remember and honour a young boy who battled since his diagnosis at age 3 without letting the disease define who he was. Now in its third year, the Walk for Thomas will be held on Sunday, October 20, 2013 at 9am MT at the Queen Elizabeth Elementary School in Calgary where Thomas was a grade 2 student at the time of his passing.

"The generous outpouring of support from the last two year's events drives us to continue our efforts to raise awareness and find a cure," said Dianne Wilkins. "Losing our son has been both devastating and senseless, and we want to do all we can to stop this from happening to other families. We are grateful that Thomas' legacy will live on through the amazing efforts of Peloton 65 and events like the Walk for Thomas, which raise funds to support important research initiatives, such as The Phage Display Project."

All funds raised from the Walk for Thomas go directly and exclusively towards The Phage Display project. This innovative research project is co-led by Dr. Paul Beaudry from the University of Calgary and Dr. David Kaplan from the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. It uses an innovative approach to identify and kill neuroblastoma cells while sparing normal cells in children. This project has been made possible through the partnership of [Peloton 65](#), a growing group of cyclists, family and friends united in the fight against neuroblastoma and [The James Fund](#), the largest umbrella organization for neuroblastoma families in Canada.

"The support and continuing efforts of Peloton 65 has contributed to the goals and success of The Phage Display project. Thomas and his courageous spirit have inspired us to continue to push forward in discovering the best way to find and destroy the neuroblastoma cells in patients," said Dr. Beaudry. "We have identified targets present in aggressive types of neuroblastoma cells we can study in the lab, and we are now working to identify the proteins we have found."

The Walk for Thomas is now the flagship event of Peloton 65 and has raised nearly \$30,000 towards the battle to defeat this deadly disease. This year's event will gather together friends, family and supporters, to once again remember an incredible young man and help find a cure for this cancer that has impacted far too many families.

Thank you to our sponsors: Semmens, Forbes & Wood Real Estate, Bite Groceteria & Café, Unique Blends, Dairy Lane, Master Meats, Premium Sausage, Todd Audio Visual, Spolumbo's Fine Foods & Deli,

A Corporate Expressions, Gravity Espresso & Wine Bar, Wendy Orr, Dialog, Majestic Tent & Event Inc., Queen Elizabeth Elementary, Cuisine & Chateau and Critical Mass.

Walk for Thomas Event Details

WHEN: Sunday, October 20, 2013

9:00am Wake-Up Refreshments

9:45am Welcome and Warm-up

10:00am Depart for 3km Walk

11:00am BBQ (back at the school)

WHERE: [Queen Elizabeth Elementary School](#)

South Parking Lot

402 18 Street Northwest, Calgary *For those who are not in Calgary but would like to participate, we'd welcome the support you show by walking in your own communities.*

TO DONATE: Please visit [Peloton 65](#) to place [your donation](#). 100% of funds will benefit The Phage Display Project.

Please contact Amanda Hooker if you or anyone on your end requires any more information on this event. You can download hi-res photos and videos of our past events here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/aw6xzyf74r5v91c/WUCqylvJOT>

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