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Community news

Pan Am Clinic Foundation honours Ruth and David Asper

By MYRON LOVE

About 400 supporters of the Pan Am Clinic Foundation were in attendance at the Fort Garry Hotel's grand ballroom on Thursday, March 10, for the 11th annual Fire and Ice Gala. In a departure from past galas, where the honorees were sports figures, this year the Foundation honoured Ruth and David Asper.

Ruth and David Asper were being recognized for their continuous support and generosity to the Pan Am Clinic Foundation as well as in Winnipeg and Manitoba as a whole," said Kelly McMullan, Pan Am Clinic Foundation Fundraising Coordinator. "They have been particularly involved in the sports community. And it was their \$1 million donation that kickstarted our capital campaign to build our (David and Ruth Asper) Research Centre which houses our Foundation. They are outstanding philanthropists."

In his remarks at the gala, Dr. Jeff Leiter, the Foundation's executive director, said that "it is very difficult to find the words to express our appreciation for what David and Ruth Asper have done for the Foundation. They didn't just give us a one million dollar donation, they also gave us one million opportunities."



RUTH and DAVID ASPER

He noted that approximately, 250,000 people walk through the doors of the Pan Am Clinic every year. "Since David & Ruth kickstarted the campaign eight years ago, we have had two million opportunities to make a difference. It might be a simple gesture, care from the nurse in the OR, or a total shoulder replacement, but there have been two million opportunities to make a difference in people's lives who are coming to us. They are injured, they are vulnerable, and they have the confidence in us to make a difference."

McMullan reported that the gala raised over \$100,000 this year. The funds, she says, go toward research, education and community outreach.

The Pan Am Clinic has been in operation since 1979. In 1985, the Clinic opened at its present site at 75 Poseidon Bay near the Pan An Pool. The clinic originally focused on athletes and sports-related injuries. It has evolved to deliver a comprehensive range of musculoskeletal care to patients from a range of backgrounds and ages, emphasizing rapid response, early and aggressive treatment, and improving patient outcomes.