



PURDUE MARION & ASSOCIATES
PUBLIC RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 17, 2014

Contact: Bill Marion
702-222-2362
702-283-0813 cell

**SHERIFF GILLESPIE, COMMISSIONER SISOLAK AND POLICE UNION
LEADER CHRIS COLLINS JOIN FORCES TO HELP AILING
LAS VEGAS GIRL FULFILL A DREAM**

Las Vegas, NV— Today, Sheriff Doug Gillespie, Clark County Commission Chairman Steve Sisolak, and Police Union leader Chris Collins made an appeal to business leaders and residents of southern Nevada to help a courageous local girl fulfill her dream.

Katlyn Oaks is the 16-year old daughter of one of Las Vegas Metro’s police sergeants. She has been battling a rare mitochondrial disease, a debilitating genetic disorder with no cure, for her entire life. This has necessitated trips to Los Angeles on a regular basis for medical treatment. While there, she has been welcomed by the Los Angeles Ronald McDonald House, which provides a “home-away-from-home” for families of seriously ill children who are receiving treatment at nearby hospitals and medical centers.

But Katlyn has taken it a step further – for the past three years, she has been a prolific fundraiser for the Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Southern California “Walk for Kids,” raising nearly \$75,000 for the Los Angeles Ronald McDonald House. This year, her dream has been to be the single largest fundraiser in the program’s history. Unfortunately, her medical condition has worsened, and she is not physically able to reach out as she could in the past. But Las Vegans can still rally around her cause and make a donation through www.katlynsdream.com.

“When you ask Katlyn what the Ronald McDonald House means to her, her response is a simple one: ‘Home’ with a little bit of magic on top,” said Ruth Oaks, Katlyn’s mother. “She says that once you step through the doors, all the staring, rude comments, but most of all your insecurities disappear. It does not matter what you look like, how you speak, or where you come from; you have entered a “special world” where everyone accepts you for who you are and welcomes you with open arms.”

Sheriff Gillespie, Commissioner Sisolak and leaders from the local police unions joined with local business leaders to urge community support for Katlyn’s Dream, and help other Las Vegas families realize their dreams as well. “Katlyn Oaks has faced personal adversity that very few of us will ever know, and yet she is always thinking about what she can do for others. When you know her story, you can’t help but want to be a part of her life and her cause,” said Clark County Commission chairman Steve Sisolak.

“Why should the community get involved?” asked Chris Collins, executive director of the Las Vegas Police Protective Association. “It’s not just because her father is a police officer; it’s because Katlyn and her family are inspirations for us; they bring out the best in our community and we have an obligation to live up to that.”

Ruth Oaks knows how important it is for children to live their dreams and to succeed: “Being the mother of a child who has been dealt multiple hurdles to overcome does not take away that desire from me. In fact it only makes it stronger knowing that to reach those dreams and to succeed means that she has to fight and fighting means she has a will to survive.”

“To know that Katlyn's dreams revolve around giving back and doing everything in her power to make sure that another child in her situation has an opportunity to enter a magical world is simply amazing,” Oaks said.

Donations to the Los Angeles Ronald McDonald House are tax deductible. Katlyn’s dream can be followed on facebook at Katlyn Oak’s Journey.

###

Ronald McDonald Houses provide a “home-away-from-home” for millions of families so they can stay close by their hospitalized child. The Ronald McDonald House offers a place to call home at little or no cost so families can afford the best care, regardless of location. The program allows families to stay together, helping their children heal faster and cope better. There are 338 Ronald McDonald Houses serving families in 35 countries and regions worldwide.