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The Roskamp Institute Makes Waves at 3rd Annual Alzheimer's Research Symposium

Today's News

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BY BRITTANY MATTIE SRQ DAILY FRESHLY SQUEEZED CONTENT EVERY MORNING TUESDAY OCT 1, 2019



Last Thursday, September 27, The Roskamp Institute hosted its third annual Grey Matters Symposium on Alzheimer's Research. The sold-out luncheon took place at the Ritz-Carlton Sarasota, and saw an incredible amount of philanthropists, business leaders and members of Sarasota's medical community mingling and stopping by the various booths of local organizations and vendors. Upon seating for the luncheon, special guest speaker and *New York Times* best selling author Kimberly Williams-Paisley kicked off GM3 by cracking a few jokes about her former comedy film career and her famous country singing husband, before getting into the importance of caregiving—sharing personal stories of her childhood and experiences in adulthood with her late mother who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

Captivated, the crowd laughed, cried and sympathized with Williams-Paisley, as she described the devastating effect her mother's diagnosis had on the family including her father, siblings, herself and her newborn children at the time. She spoke very candidly of the hardships her family endured during her mother's deterioration and her regrets that she did not ignore her mother's implorments to never talk about her disease or discuss it with anyone. She says had she asked around or done more to learn about Alzheimer's, they may have found ways to make those years more comfortable and livable for her mother. Had she known about The Roskamp Institute, she mentions, she may have been able to give her mother the care she needed. "The hardest thing for me to realize," she says, "is sometimes caregivers need caregiving." Williams-Paisley ends to a standing ovation of applause from the whole room, with the final say, "If she were here right now, she'd tell you to lean into this kind of group and welcome the light that will charge in."

The following speaker Dr. Cheryl Brandi, DNSc, ARNP, NP-C—a board certified adult nurse practitioner and certified dementia practitioner—shared day-to-day hardships of being a caregiver for those affected by this untreatable disease, then lit a fire of empowerment in the crowd to take life's challenges that come with a loved one having a neurological disease and continue to see them as the person they still are deep down. Then, Dr. Mike Mulan—internationally recognized authority on Alzheimer's disease and related neurodegenerative disorders—shared updates on various areas of brain health, explained preventative measures, early symptom warnings and clinical research updates regarding the potential for new treatment. The special public announcement stirred applause with the thought of breakthrough testing and the promising exploration of a treatment.

Following the presentations and an interactive Q & A from Leadership at The Roskamp Institute, attendees participated in a glow stick fundraising challenge. GM3 volunteers handed out blue glow sticks to the audience before turning the lights out and stating, "Raise your hand up if you, or someone you know, have been personally affected by Alzheimer's disease." Whether a husband, wife, parent, friend, or they

themselves with early signs, just about every single hand raised. Hands continued to wave in the air when asked amounts of generous donations they were willing to give right there and then. With a number of donors eager to turn science into action, many pulled out their checkbooks on the spot for donations ranging from \$10 to \$10,000. The Institute hit their GM3 goal of \$25,000, and did it in less than five minutes.

All proceeds raised at the symposium will go towards ongoing Alzheimer's research and development at The Roskamp Institute (<https://www.roskampfoundation.org/>).

Learn more about Grey Matter Symposium 2019 here. (<https://www.roskampinstitute.org/event/3rd-annual-grey-matters-symposium/>)

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