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WINSTON PROJECT DONATES TO FRIENDS OF MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL

WHITFIELD—Nationally-renowned pianist George Winston's recent benefit concerts in Jackson resulted in a generous donation that will benefit children being served at Mississippi State Hospital (MSH) and Hudspeth Regional Center.

Dr. Janet Schriver, Director of the Winston Project, and Dr. Craig Escude, a physician at MSH and at Hudspeth, presented a check to Friends of Mississippi State Hospital on Wednesday, March 23 at the hospital's Whitfield campus. The funds will be used in upcoming projects for children at Oak Circle Center, the child and adolescent unit at the hospital, as well as at Hudspeth.

"Janet is a longtime friend of George Winston, and had the great idea of starting the Winston Project to benefit disadvantaged kids and help them develop self-esteem through art," Escude said.

"Because Chastain Junior High is in the Fondren area, she thought it would be great to have a kick-off fundraising concert for the Winston Project in Fondren, so we got together and made it happen."

Winston grew up in Mississippi and was a student at Chastain, not far from circa., the recently-opened retail location Escude and his wife, Michele, own. The store carries art made by Schriver, who began discussing her new venture at the Winston Project with Escude.

"The Winston Project is for disadvantaged and unprivileged children, and we were talking about that when he told me that was what he did, working with kids at Oak Circle Center and at Hudspeth, and I thought that tied in wonderfully with the mission of the Project," Schriver said.

The Escudes offered circa. as a venue for the concert, and Winston played two nights on Feb. 25 and 26. Concert goers at the second night had a chance to meet and greet the pianist, known around the country for his tributes to Vince Guaraldi, the composer of the Peanuts cartoons, as well as for his own contemporary piano instrumentals.

Schriver visited the MSH campus on Wednesday, March 23 to present a check to Bill Bobbs, president of Friends of MSH, and to tour the campus and get to know more about the hospital and its patients.

"From what I've seen, it's just amazing, the work that's being done here," Schriver said. "It's very touching to see the people caring as much as they do for the kids, and I'm really glad we were able to give some money to the right place."

MSH, a facility of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, was founded in 1855 and facilitates improvement in the quality of life for Mississippians who are in need of mental health, chemical dependency or nursing home services, by rehabilitating to the least restrictive environment, utilizing a range of psychiatric and medical services, which reflect the accepted standard of care and are in compliance with statutory and regulatory guidelines. The hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission.

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PHOTO ATTACHED: Pictured are (l to r) Friends of Mississippi State Hospital President Bill Bobbs, Winston Project Director Dr. Janet Schriver, and Mississippi State Hospital and Hudspeth Regional Center physician Dr. Craig Escude. The Winston Project is the non-profit foundation of nationally-renowned pianist George Winston. Its inaugural fundraiser was held Feb. 25 and Feb. 26 at circa., the Fondren shop owned by Escude, with proceeds going to benefit Friends of Mississippi State Hospital and Friends of Hudspeth.