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**Lee Health's Dave Cato Receives Special Olympics Florida Golisano Health Leadership Award**

*~ Award is Florida's highest Special Olympics health honor ~*

(Fort Myers, Fla. – Oct. 25, 2018) Dave Cato, Lee Health's Chief Administrative Officer of Outpatient Services, has received the 2018 Golisano Health Leadership Award from Special Olympics Florida. Established in 2016, the award honors individuals and organizations that have shown dedication toward improving the health of people with intellectual disabilities and advancing the health work of Special Olympics.

"The Golisano Health Leadership Award is the highest honor for health partners and individuals that Special Olympics recognizes. The award was created to celebrate local health champions and their extraordinary efforts toward promoting equal access to healthcare, wellness and fitness for people with intellectual disabilities," said Berit Amlie, Chief Administrative Officer of Special Olympics Florida. "David Cato exemplifies the mission and vision of this award. He has made a significant impact in the recruitment of hundreds of healthcare professionals, volunteers and students throughout the state of Florida.

Cato began volunteering for the Special Olympics when he was in college and has served as the Clinical Director for Special Olympics Florida for the past six years. In this volunteer role he oversees the "Fun Fitness" program and provides physical therapy screenings for athletes participating in local, regional and state Special Olympics events. While serving as Clinical Director, Cato has recruited countless health care professionals, physical therapists, students and family members to join him in volunteering at Special Olympics events.

"I am humbled to receive this distinguished honor. Like all Special Olympic volunteers, I have learned so much from the hundreds of athletes I have had the pleasure of meeting over the years. They truly embody the Special Olympics mission and provide all of us with the example and path to fulfill our lives. Thank you to Special Olympics Florida for coming to meet with us at Golisano Children's Hospital and working with us to expand programs to care for Special Olympics athletes. I am truly honored, and I look forward to volunteering with my family for many years to come," said Cato.

The award is named in honor of Tom Golisano, who has donated more than \$37 million to Special Olympics health programs to increase access to health, fitness and wellness programs for people with intellectual disabilities. Up to seven Golisano Health Leadership honorees will be selected to receive the global award presented at the 2019 Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi.

For more information on volunteering with Special Olympics Florida, visit their website at:

<https://specialolympicsflorida.org/get-involved/become-a-volunteer/>

**About Lee Health**

*Since the opening of the first hospital in 1916, Lee Health has been a health care leader in Southwest Florida, constantly evolving to meet the needs of the community. A non-profit, integrated health care services organization, Lee Health is committed to the well-being of every individual served, focused on healthy living and maintaining good health. Staffed by caring people, inspiring health, services are conveniently located throughout the community in four acute care hospitals, two specialty hospitals, outpatient centers, walk-in medical centers, primary care and specialty physician practices and other services across the continuum of care. Formerly known as Lee Memorial Health System, the organization began its second century of service with a new name in 2016. Learn more at [www.LeeHealth.org](http://www.LeeHealth.org).*