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**KOMEN ORANGE COUNTY CELEBRATES 26 YEARS
OF FIGHTING CANCER AT RACE FOR THE CURE**

*Daughter of beloved Komen OC supporter performed tribute song
for her mother who lost battle against the disease*

IRVINE, Calif. September 28, 2017 – About 15,000 breast cancer survivors, supporters and volunteers from Orange County and beyond gathered in Newport Beach’s Fashion Island on Sunday for the [Susan G. Komen Orange County Race for the Cure®](#). In its 26th year, this year’s Race called for supporters to “Be More Than Pink,” to get more involved, to build more awareness and to raise more funds for the breast cancer movement.

A day of hope, celebration and courage, the race brought the local community together to inspire hope for those fighting breast cancer, celebrate survivors and honor those who have lost their battle with the disease. This year, a special tribute was paid to Robin Pollok, a recognizable voice at the annual fundraiser, who performed every year at the Race since 2000. Robin lost her third battle to the debilitating disease in June and on Sunday, her 17-year-old daughter, Emily, performed a poignant rendition of Celine Dion’s classic hit ‘My Heart Will Go On’ in her mother’s memory.

During the program, Komen Orange County Executive Director Lisa Wolter announced that the national Komen organization will focus its 2017 research grants portfolio on metastatic breast cancer, investing \$30.7 million in new research grants. Additionally, in 2018, 100 percent of new grants for Komen’s Young Investigators Program, which invites young researchers to focus on breast cancer issues, will be focused on metastatic breast cancer and treatment resistance that leads to it.

“Every year, we are uplifted seeing the community come together to step up and take action against breast cancer,” said Lisa Wolter, executive director of Komen Orange County. “We are a movement that will not stop until our mission to end breast cancer is achieved. Komen’s new focus on the most lethal forms and stages of breast cancer is exactly what we need to reach our bold goal of reducing deaths from breast cancer by 50 percent by 2026.”

The first 5K kicked off with a 7:15 a.m. start time for early risers or those who chose to run. The Kids One-Mile Fun Run & Walk with Snoopy and friends, presented by Knott’s Berry Farm, began at 8 a.m. and the last, and largest, wave of runners/walkers participated at 9:45 a.m.

The hallmark moment of the event was the Survivor Tribute ceremony, which united more than 800 breast cancer survivors on the steps of the Pacific Life building. The tribute is a memorable and moving ceremony highlighted by inspiring speeches from survivors and advocates and the release of white doves to recognize survivors and pay tribute to those who lost their battle to the disease. Among the breast cancer warriors sharing their inspiring stories during the ceremony were:

- **Angelique Fong**, Rancho Santa Margarita resident, is a four-year breast cancer survivor who has been a dedicated Komen supporter and volunteer since the late 1990s. She had no symptoms when she received her breast cancer diagnosis at age 39. Luckily, Fong’s prognosis was positive due to being diagnosed early and she wants others to be able to say the same. With more than a decade of Races for the Cure under her belt, Fong continues to walk/run for breast cancer survivors like herself, and for their families.

- **Veronica Mora**, Lake Forest resident, credits Komen Orange County for her surviving the battle against breast cancer after her diagnosis at the young age of 26. At the time, she was a student without insurance. Mora is now a survivor with more determination than ever and a proud graduate of Cal State Fullerton.

“Through our long-standing relationship with the Susan G. Komen Foundation and Komen Orange County, Pacific Life and its employees are inspired to help to make a difference in the fight against breast cancer,” said Tennyson Oyler, vice president of Brand Management and Public Affairs, Pacific Life, Race for the Cure’s Home of the Race sponsor. “As the home of the race for the last 26 years and a sponsor, we are proud to be a part of helping make the race a success.”

Other sponsors of the Race include The Allergan Foundation, Chevron and Knott’s Berry Farm (presenting sponsors); ABC7, Ralphs and Food4Less, and Pacific Life Insurance Company (platinum sponsors); 100.3 The Sound, Fashion Island, First American Title Insurance Company, Hot Ticket Racing Carol & Becky Burch (diamond sponsors); Kaiser Permanente, Macy’s, Park Newport Apartment Communities and Spa Gregories (gold sponsors); Cox Communications, Myriad Genetics, Orora Packaging Solutions, Smart Levels, Sparkling Ice (silver sponsors) and founding sponsor The Orange County Register.

The 26th Annual Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure by the numbers:

- As the largest and most successful breast cancer fundraiser in California, the Susan G. Komen Orange County Race for the Cure is expected to raise more than **\$2 million** this year for the organization.
- There were more than **460** teams, the largest being Bank of America/Merrill Lynch/US Trust Team with 321 members
- More than **1,600** volunteers assisted in preparation for the event, at booths, water stations, on the course and clean-up.
- Doug McKay, who was Komen Orange County’s first male chair and is community grant and giving chair for Macy’s Orange County, served as Race Chair for the **fourth** consecutive year.

Seventy-five percent of the funds raised through Komen Orange County events and initiatives support local breast cancer awareness and education programs, and diagnostic and treatment services for uninsured and underinsured women. The other 25 percent is allocated for the Komen Award and Research Grant Program to fund groundbreaking breast cancer research, and to support Komen researchers in their quest for a breast cancer cure.

Participants are encouraged to fundraise through October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, with Oct. 31 the deadline to receive all donations. To make a contribution, visit www.komenoc.org/race.

About Susan G. Komen® and Komen Orange County

Susan G. Komen is the world’s largest breast cancer organization, funding more breast cancer research than any other nonprofit while providing real-time help to those facing the disease. Komen has set a Bold Goal to reduce the current number of breast cancer deaths by 50 percent in the U.S. by 2026. Komen was founded in 1982 by Nancy G. Brinker, who promised her sister, Susan G. Komen, that she would end the disease that claimed Suzy’s life. Komen Orange County is working to better the lives of those that face breast cancer in the local community. Through events like the Komen Orange County Race for the Cure®, Komen Orange County has invested more than \$38 million in community breast health programs and has helped contribute to the more than \$920 million invested globally in research. For more information, call 714-957-9157 or visit komenoc.org.

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