

# The Hope Foundation

OF THE  
MAHONING VALLEY

**For Immediate Release:** Sunday, February 01, 2009

**Media Contact:** Director, Tony Spano, 330-728-2669 or [avspano@hopemv.org](mailto:avspano@hopemv.org)

## Charity Event Brings People of All Ages Together for Common Goal-To Raise Money for Chronically/Terminally Ill Children of the Mahoning Valley

The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual "Game of Hope Charity Basketball Classic" took place on the Youngstown State University campus on January 24 on the new-look Dom Rosselli Court, inside Beeghly Center. The Hope Foundation of the Mahoning Valley & Accent Media were the presenters of the event, which raises money for chronically/terminally ill children of the Mahoning Valley.

The charity event pitted two celebrity teams against each other with the squads comprised of local celebrities, dignitaries, community leaders and media; all from the Mahoning Valley area. In addition, the day was fun for the whole family with mascots Pete & Penny (YSU), Boomer (MV Thunder) and Scrappy (MV Scrappers) greeting kids of all ages.

The event raised over \$6,000 with monies still being pledged and donated. The event has taken a momentous step by adding a tape-delayed television broadcast with the hopes raising additional funds for the event. The charity event will be televised on FOX 17/62-TV, Sunday, Feb. 8, 2009 @ 5pm. Bob Hannon, President/CEO of the United Way of Youngstown & Amanda Beagle, Miss Ohio (2004) call all of the action. Tune in to see the interviews, bloopers and other things that you might have originally missed. You also have the opportunity to buy the telecast on DVD for a \$10 donation to the fund. In addition, you will be able to see the Mahoning Valley Dance Team, YSU's men's basketball team Slam Dunk Exhibition and the STC Academy of Boardman. Full performances will be included on the DVD.

Team Graham was coached by Jim Graham, President of UAW 1112, GM-Lordstown while Team Morgan was coached by David Lee Morgan, Jr., author & sportswriter for the Akron Beacon Journal. In the first half, Team Graham held a commanding 19-6 lead, but Team Morgan rallied to finish the 1<sup>st</sup> half on a 16-4 run to make it 23-22 at halftime. Trying to make changes at halftime, Team Owner and Coach Harry Meshel, YSU Board of Trustee & former Ohio State Senator and David Lee Morgan tried everything in their power to work out a trade with Coach Graham during halftime, but were denied.

It was a nail biter to the end with Team Graham pulling out a 46-44 win. It was a win-win for everyone involved as a great time was had by all. Over the last five years, this event has given nearly \$15,000 to chronically/terminally ill organizations. Congressman Tim Ryan of the 17<sup>th</sup> District of Ohio could not agree more. "I am happy to play in the Game of Hope and to join the Hope Foundation of the Mahoning Valley in raising the monies needed to serve chronically ill children. There is no better commitment than helping our children in their time of need." he said.

For Team Morgan, Adam Tokash, Mahoning Valley Thunder General Manager had 12 points while Adam Underhill, Jackson Milton Basketball Coach & Joe Aulisio, assistant sports director at WKBN/FOX 17-62 added six each respectively.

Nick Graham, Warren City Prosecutor, led all scorers with 16 points but Felix Wright, former Cleveland Browns star, had 10 points en-route to the Crowe Cabinet's MVP Award for hitting two of the last four foul shots to put the game on ice.

Joining Graham & Wright on the winning team was Ohio Attorney General Richard Cordray, Congressmen John Boccieri & Tim Ryan of Ohio, City of Warren Prosecutor Nick Graham, David Green from UAW 1714, Jeff Pegg, President of NEOEA, Mark Herron, President, Herron Office Products, Jeff Ryznar, the Nominate-a-Player Winner, Eric Ryan the Executive Director of the Chevrolet Centre, Emily Haynam, Assistant Director of Athletics at YSU and the Founder of the MVP 20/30 Club, Mike Latessa.

In addition to Tokash, Aulisio & Underhill for Team Morgan, other participants included YSU's Director of Athletics, Ron Strollo, John Reardon the Ohio Super. Financial Institution, Youngstown City Councilman Paul Drennen, Mike Venrose of Turning Technologies, Assistant Coach, Ursuline High School Football Coach Dan Reardon, Patrick Smith, the Executive Director of Flying Horse Farms, Joe Fanto, Vice President of National City Bank, Joe Schiavoni, the State Senator of the 33<sup>rd</sup> District of Ohio, and Matt Spatz from 93.3 "The Wolf." While YSU Board of Trustee and former Ohio State Senator Harry Meshel, who served as Honorary Team Owner.

**Corporate sponsors included 27 First News, FOX 17/62, 95.9 KISS-FM, MIX 98.9, GM-Lordstown Complex, UAW Locals 1714 & 1112, NEOEA (North Eastern Ohio Education Association), and Lamar Advertising Company.**

### Board of Trustees

Adam Tokash  
Mahoning Valley Thunder

Dr. Harold Yiannaki  
YSU Emeritus

Janet Szenborn  
Mahoning County

Joseph M. Damore, CPA  
Cohen & Company, Ltd.

Larry Ryan  
Eric Ryan Productions

Maria Colista  
Columbiana WIC

Mike Latessa  
Forum Health

Nick Graham  
City of Warren

Paul Drennen  
City of Youngstown

Phil Kidd  
Defend Youngstown, Inc

Scott Schulick  
Butler Wick Company

Sharon J. Schroeder  
Chairwoman  
YSU

Anthony V. Spano  
Director, Hope Foundation  
YSU