

Speaker Ryan: Announces guests for President Trump's first State of the Union

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WASHINGTON—House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) has announced that the following guests will be seated in the House gallery tomorrow night during President Trump's first State of the Union address.

A Lesson in Miracles

Jackson Poulos, six-years-old, joined by parents Ashley and John of Franklin, Wisconsin. At four-years-old, Jackson was diagnosed with a very rare form of cancer in his GI tract and abdomen—so rare, only 350 cases are reported annually. Jackson needed FDA approval for a life-saving chemo treatment while undergoing surgery and sought the help of Speaker Ryan's district office, which was able to help secure the approval of FDA paperwork while Jackson was undergoing surgery to have his tumors removed. Jackson has now finished his chemo treatment and received a clear scan during his most recent check-up—a reality that many doctors thought would not be possible.

"Jackson's story proves that miracles really do happen," said Speaker Ryan. "The odds were stacked against him, but he and his family charted their own course. I'm thankful our team was able to play a small hand in his road to recovery and am relieved to learn he recently received a good report. Jackson is a fighter. I'm looking forward to welcoming him and his parents to Washington for the president's address."

Janesville's Inspiration

Kyle Pucek of Janesville, Wisconsin. Age 23—that's how old Kyle Pucek was when his addiction to opioids began. Prescribed painkillers after an ankle injury, Kyle eventually began using heroin—and saw his life fall apart. After many medical scares and personal trials, Kyle has been sober since November of 2013—and now dedicates himself to helping those battling addiction through local groups like Hope Over Heroin. Kyle's message is a concise yet powerful one: Those struggling with addiction should never lose hope.

"Opioid addiction knows no bounds—it's taking control of lives in my very district," said Speaker Ryan. "Kyle choosing to share his story to help others is bravery in its rawest form. I'm proud to hail from the same zip code as he does, and I know our community is better off thanks to his efforts. Washington is no Wisconsin, but I'm honored that Kyle is making the trip to join us tomorrow night."

A Fighter for Faith and the Unborn

Cathy Cenzone-DeCarlo of Brooklyn, New York. In 2009, while working at a hospital in New York, nurse Cathy Cenzone-DeCarlo was forced to assist with a late-term abortion. Though she objected on grounds of violating her religious beliefs, the hospital threatened disciplinary action if she did not participate. After a years-long legal battle and an investigation led by the Department of Health and Human Services, the hospital eventually changed its policy to ensure medical personnel are not forced to participate in abortions. Now, Cathy is an outspoken advocate on behalf of other medical personnel who are faced with the same unjust dilemma.

"No one should be forced to violate their religious beliefs—especially in the workplace," said Speaker Ryan. "Not only did Cathy stick up for her faith, but she did so while fighting for the unborn. It's wrong that Cathy and so many others have been intimidated into assisting with abortions, which is why the Trump administration's expanded conscience protections are a welcomed change. As a staunch defender of religious liberty, I was very moved by Cathy's story—I am delighted she's attending tomorrow night's address."