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Editor's Note: *LEEZA GIBBONS will replace previously-schedule speaker Kimberly Williams Paisley, who cancelled due to an unexpected production schedule conflict.*

Juliette Fowler Communities Announces Leeza Gibbons as Keynote Speaker for Visionary Women Luncheon on May 1

AWARE has been named the 2020 Visionary Women Award recipient for its philanthropic leadership in fighting Alzheimer's disease

Dallas, TX – Jan. 30, 2020 –Juliette Fowler Communities announces Leeza Gibbons, Emmy Award-Winning TV/radio personality, philanthropist, *New York Times* best-selling author, and caregiver advocate, will headline the 8th Annual Visionary Women Luncheon on Friday, May 1, at the OMNI Dallas Hotel, 555 S. Lamar Street. Previously scheduled speaker Kimberly Williams Paisley will no longer attend the luncheon due to an unexpected production schedule conflict.

Known for her decades-long career in entertainment and news media from “Entertainment Tonight” to her award-winning daytime talk show, “Leeza,” Leeza Gibbons is one of the leading voices for issues facing family caregivers. When her mother and grandmother were struggling with Alzheimer’s disease, she created the Leeza Gibbons Memory Foundation in 2002 as a promise to her mother to “tell her story and make it count.” Leeza’s Place, now known as Leeza’s Care Connection is the signature program of the foundation, opening its first doors in 2003 to offer free services for the voiceless population of family caregivers who report feeling under-valued and alone on their caregiving journey. Her mother passed away in 2008, and she wrote about the experience in her 2009 book, *Take Your Oxygen First: Protecting Your Health and Happiness While Caring for a Loved One with Memory Loss*. In 2015, Gibbons was named the winner of the NBC competition, “Celebrity Apprentice,” and invested her prize money into her foundation. She recently expanded the foundation’s mission to help families dealing with chronic illnesses and diseases in addition to Alzheimer’s and dementia.

“Juliette Fowler Communities is honored to bring the inspiring and talented Leeza Gibbons to Dallas,” said Nicole Gann, president and CEO, Juliette Fowler Communities. “In addition to her extensive background in the field of entertainment and news media, she is an instrumental advocate for healthcare, wellness and caregiving, and a true voice of hope. Her diverse and impressive career, coupled with her personal story and dedication to help caregivers, will leave our audience empowered and uplifted.”

Located on 25 picturesque acres, Juliette Fowler Communities features the only dementia care program in Dallas, and one of only three in Texas, certified in the I’m Still Here® approach, a unique paradigm shift in memory care. As an I’m Still Here® Center for Excellence in Dementia Care, Juliette Fowler Communities provides an engagement-focused program connecting with those living with Alzheimer’s and related dementias through abilities that do not diminish with time. By offering families and professionals ways to emotionally connect with loved ones who are still there through communication techniques and life enrichment, this program sparks creativity and engagement, helping them to thrive.

The Visionary Women Luncheon Chair **Michelle Feavel** announces the 2020 luncheon award recipients: **AWARE** will receive the Visionary Women Award for its philanthropic leadership in support of Alzheimer's care and research; and **Deloitte** will receive the Erika McKenzie Volunteer Award for its 20 years of volunteer service at Juliette Fowler Communities. A TCU student, to be announced soon, will receive the Juliette Fowler Faith and Service Award. Honorary Luncheon Chairs are **Mary and Roland Bandy**.

"Juliette Fowler Communities is thrilled to honor these 2020 award recipients for the incredible impact they have made and continue to make in this community and beyond," added Michelle Feavel, luncheon chair. "The extraordinary work of Leeza Gibbons is a perfect complement to this year's Visionary Women Award recipients as all play a key role in serving those living with Alzheimer's and their families."

The Visionary Women Honoree **AWARE**, founded in 1989, has raised and donated over \$13.5 million in support of programs, projects and research to help individuals affected by Alzheimer's in Dallas and North Texas. Founding members include Ruth Sharp Altshuler, Cyndy Hudgins, Nancy Nelson, Evelyn Ponder, Billie Leigh Rippey, and Anita Sampels. Working in partnership with The Dallas Foundation, AWARE selects and provides grants to nonprofits in Dallas and North Texas working on the front lines in the fight against Alzheimer's disease. AWARE has funded Fowler's music and art therapy programs; provided the lead gift for training, implementation and certification for Fowler's I'm Still Here® Center for Excellence in Dementia Care, as well as provided the lead gift for Dementia Friendly Dallas.

For the past 20 years, **Deloitte LLP**, this year's Erika McKenzie Volunteer Award honoree, has selected Fowler Communities as a volunteer site for its annual international day of service, Impact Day. This past year was the company's 20th Impact Day, and the 19th year of volunteering at Fowler Communities. Approximately 150 volunteers, many of whom return year after year, spend the day working on projects at Fowler, providing all necessary funding. Activities include gardening, painting, organizing, cleaning, building or engaging in activities with residents.

Leeza Gibbons' current roles include co-hosting the Rose Parade for Nexstar Media Group & the Hallmark channel. In 2013, she won the Daytime Emmy for Outstanding Host for the weekly TV news show "My Generation" on PBS. She is also the author of additional bestselling books, including *Fierce Optimism: Seven Secrets for Playing Nice and Winning Big* and *Take 2: Your Guide to Creating Happy Endings*. Gibbons lives in Los Angeles with her husband, *New York Times* Best Selling Author Steven Fenton, and their rescue pup, Biggie. She remains close with her father Carlos, and she has three children, daughter, Leksy, and sons, Troy and Nate.

"Please join us for this exciting opportunity to hear the amazing and compassionate Leeza Gibbons, and help us honor three outstanding award recipients," added Nicole Gann. "Your support of this luncheon and Juliette Fowler Communities provides critical funding to our One Heart Annual Fund, enabling us to continue to implement the most innovative programs, while caring for the most vulnerable among us, the young and old at Fowler."

Luncheon sponsors are CultureMap Dallas and NBC5. Tickets are \$200, and sponsorships are available. Contact Jamie Rodgers, jamier@fowlercommunities.org, 214-818-0342. Visit <https://fowlercommunities.org/visionary-women-luncheon/>

Juliette Fowler Communities is a unique faith-based, intergenerational community of residents at various life-stages. Located on 25 picturesque acres, Juliette Fowler Communities provides independent and assisted living, a Five-Star Quality Rated skilled nursing and rehabilitation center, memory care and affordable senior housing. As the only certified I'm Still Here® Center for Excellence in Dementia Care in Dallas and one of only three in Texas, Fowler's program employs evidence-based techniques to adapt experiences to an individual's cognitive abilities and strengths. It has also been named a Great Place to Work in the Aging Services Industry in 2018 and 2019. Additionally, on the grounds is The Ebby House, a residence for young women, ages 18-24, at risk for homelessness due to neglect, abuse, and aging out of the foster care system. The Ebby House program instills life skills and provides mentoring, health care, education, career guidance and job training. Additional services of Juliette Fowler Communities include foster and adoption services. Visit fowlercommunities.org or call 214.827.0813.