



## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### **Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida Sponsors 750 Mile Walk of Life from Duke University**

SARASOTA, FLORIDA April 7 - Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida joins **The Walk of Life** from Duke University Medical Center as their official banking institution for this unprecedented 750 mile walk to support Brain Cancer treatment.

After six-years of treatment for malignant brain tumors, Tony, a 38 year old former world-class athlete and creator, is now *cancer free* and wants to share his adventure by Paying it Forward to raise \$100,000 and to help raise awareness about the importance of improving health and brain cancer treatments.

"Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida is proud to be associated with the "Walk of Life" effort, says Shaun Merriman, President and Chief Executive Officer."Tony McEachern's strength and unwavering persistence throughout these past six years is an inspiration to all of us. With the right attitude and the right team, anything is possible!"

To recognize ***The Preston Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center*** and their entire medical staff for his life saving treatments, Tony has created this **Walk of Life** from Duke University Medical Center, a 35 Day, 750-mile walk to benefit ***The Preston Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center***. Beginning in Durham, North Carolina on April 25th, the walk will cross 4 states and 40 counties ending in Sarasota, Florida on May 31st.

Endorsed by, and in partnership with Duke University Medical's ***The Preston***

**Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center** , all proceeds from the walk will go directly to their efforts and programs for awareness, education, advocacy and research on brain cancer. For more information, visit [www.cancer.duke.edu/btc](http://www.cancer.duke.edu/btc). To learn about Tony's personal adventure back to health, his previous 170 Mile Walk across Florida and details about this April/May event including course map and city listings with by dates visit: <http://www.teamtony.org/TeamTonySponsorship.html>

**Other Sponsors** to partner with the walk early on are: Sunset Chevrolet, Trakkers, Alliance Hospitality Management, New Balance, Village Bikes and others.

**About Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida:** Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida is an independent community bank serving business and personal banking customers in Sarasota and Manatee counties.

Gateway Bank operates three full-service banking locations in Sarasota and Manatee counties, including a newly announced location at the intersection of University Parkway and Lockwood Ridge Road. Gateway Bank also operates a full service banking location in the Center Pointe Plaza at 2033 Main Street in downtown Sarasota, one block east of South Washington Boulevard. The bank opened a second banking location in downtown Bradenton on Manatee Avenue West in November 2008.

The shareholders and directors of Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida are primarily residents of Sarasota and Manatee counties. The founding Board of Directors includes: Charles J. Bartlett - Icard, Merrill, Cullis, Timm, Furen and Ginsburg, PA; Dr. Gary K. Bockhold – Center for Sight; Dr. P.T. “Bud” Fleuchaus – Gateway Financial Holdings of Florida, Inc.; David J. Grain – Grain Communications Group, Inc.; David K. Maholias – Gateway Financial Holdings of Florida, Inc.; Shaun P. Merriman – Gateway Bank of Southwest Florida; Gavin W. Meshad – JWM Management, Inc.; Katherine K. Moulton – The Colony Beach & Tennis Resort; Wayne M. Ruben – Ruben-Holland Development, LLC; David E. Sessions, Willis A. Smith Construction, Inc. and Jan E. Smith, Jan Smith and Company.

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