**For Immediate Release**

**Introducing the First Annual 'Feed the Cause': An Arizona Signature Event**

*Feeding Matters to Host an Inspirational Evening Supporting Pediatric Feeding Disorder*

**PHOENIX, Ariz. (October 11 , 2023)** – The first annual *Feed the Cause: an Arizona Signature Event Supporting Pediatric Feeding Disorder (PFD),* promises an unforgettable evening of education, inspiration and connection. Hosted on November 9, 2023, at the picturesque Papago Golf Club and proudly presented by Lerner and Rowe Gives Back and Shamrock Foods Foundation, this year's event is a testament to our resilience as we happily return to in-person gatherings.

**Understanding Pediatric Feeding Disorder (PFD)**

Pediatric feeding disorder is often a silent battle affecting more than one in 37 American children under the age of five annually. This prevalence surpasses that of well-known childhood conditions like cerebral palsy and autism. PFD is defined as impaired oral intake that is not age-appropriate and is associated with medical, nutritional, feeding skills, and psychosocial dysfunction. Families dealing with PFD face a multitude of obstacles, including limited access to evidence-based data, the intricate and frequently misinterpreted characteristics and nature of PFD, and the emotional strain of caring for a child who experiences difficulty eating. Meal times become a laborious journey where each calorie and developmental milestone is a hard-fought victory.

**Event Highlights**Guests will be joined by honorary chairs Shannon and Bob Goldwater as the signature event offers a captivating evening featuring:

* **Real Stories**: Hear heartwarming accounts from families and children with PFD.
* **Gourmet Cuisine:** Savor delectable dishes crafted by the renowned culinary team at Papago Golf Club and enjoy a full open bar.
* **Live Chef Demos:** Gain culinary insights from acclaimed chef Roberto Centeno of [Bacanora](https://www.bacanoraphx.com/) and [Espiritu](https://www.espiritumesa.com/), [recently featured on Chopped](https://www.azcentral.com/story/entertainment/dining/2022/10/18/roberto-centeno-phoenix-chef-bacanora-food-network-chopped/10532497002/), and Katie Murwin, [Sensory Cooking](https://www.sensorycooking.net/) founder and CEO who will be joined by Janet Morrow M.S., CCC-SLP,
* **Live Mixology Demos**: Learn how to craft signature drinks using favorite ingredients from our families
* **A 360° Photo Booth:** Create lasting memories with friends as you capture a 360° video of your evening.
* **Silent Auction:** Bid on exclusive items and experiences while contributing to a noble cause.
* **An Evening of Connection:** Network with like-minded individuals and community leaders, forging valuable connections and supporting a worthy cause.

Katie Murwin's lifelong love for food, nurtured in her grandma's kitchen, led her to a career in restaurant management. She managed restaurants that championed inclusivity, offered farm-to-table fare, and supported local artists. Her journey took a new turn when her children arrived. Paige, Nicholas, and Drew each faced unique challenges and they all triumphed. Paige needed early speech and occupational therapy, Nicholas was diagnosed with autism and Drew had sensory issues and speech delays. Fast forward 25 years, and Katie is a proud mother to three accomplished young adults. The question remained: What's next? That's when [Sensory Cooking](https://www.sensorycooking.net/) was born. As a passionate cook and an advocate for children and young adults with diverse learning abilities, Katie founded Sensory Cooking. This venture beautifully aligns with her nonprofit, [Kids with Autism Can](https://www.kidswithautismcan.org/), which has been transforming lives for a decade. Sensory Cooking's core belief mirrors that of Kids with Autism Can: food has the power to connect, educate, and inspire independence in children and young adults with autism and other spectrum disorders. Together, they embark on a journey towards greater inclusivity and culinary exploration.

Roberto Centeno is the Executive Chef of [Espiritu](https://www.espiritumesa.com/). He was born in Arizona, raised primarily in Mexico and returned to Phoenix for High School. He graduated from Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts- Scottsdale and has been in the food and beverage industry since 2013. Espiritu was named one of the best new restaurants in America by Bon Appétit and Esquire magazines in 2022 for its elevated Sonoran dishes cooked over mesquite fire, was voted one of America’s 15 best new restaurants and has enjoyed rave reviews from several food critics. Centeno was named a James Beard Foundation award finalist.

All proceeds from the event will bolster Feeding Matters’ mission to improve the lives of children living with Pediatric Feeding Disorder and to make a difference in the lives of those all they serve. This endeavor offers an array of attractive sponsorship packages with exceptional promotional benefits, underlining your commitment to this essential cause.

**Feeding Matters offers ample opportunities to get involved:**

* [Learn about PFD](https://www.feedingmatters.org/power-of-a-diagnosis-pfd-stories/): Explore the power of a diagnosis in these [PFD Stories](https://www.feedingmatters.org/power-of-a-diagnosis-pfd-stories/) or [share your own](https://www.feedingmatters.org/submit-your-pfd-family-story/)
* [Become a sponsor:](https://www.feedingmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Final-Feed-the-Cause-Sponsor-Packet.pdf) Discover how your organization can make a difference as a valued event sponsor.
* [Make your Sponsorship commitment](https://forms.monday.com/forms/87cd657aad2588a5bfee0c76a511fa3b?r=use1): Take a proactive step toward supporting children with PFD.
* [Get your tickets](https://feedingmatters.networkforgood.com/events/60348-feed-the-cause-an-arizona-signature-event-supporting-pfd)
* **Donate:**Make a direct contribution to Feeding Matters during the event
* **Bid:** Participate in the silent auction to win incredible items
* **Share:** Spread the word about our event and mission within your network

“In creating the First Annual 'Feed the Cause,' we aspire to shine a light on Pediatric Feeding Disorder, a battle impacting countless lives,” said Jaclyn Pederson, chief executive officer of Feeding Matters. “This event is not just a fundraiser; it is a platform for education, inspiration, and forging connections within our community. It is also an occasion for Arizonans to feel tremendous pride, as this locally-founded nonprofit creates a positive difference in the lives of these children and their families worldwide, one PFD case at a time. Join us in-person on November 9th for an unforgettable evening, as we embrace this meaningful cause." Pederson concluded.

**About Feeding Matters**

For kids with pediatric feeding disorder (PFD), every bite of food can be painful, scary, or simply impossible to swallow, potentially impeding nutrition, development, growth, and overall well-being. Yet, there is no functional system of care for PFD locally, nationally, or internationally. That’s why Feeding Matters is dedicated to creating a world where children with pediatric feeding disorder will thrive. Established in 2006, Feeding Matters is the first organization in the world uniting the concerns of families with the field’s leading advocates, experts, and allied healthcare professionals to ignite unprecedented change to the system of care through advocacy, education, support, and research – including a stand-alone diagnosis, the International Pediatric Feeding Disorder Conference, and the Infant and Child Feeding Questionnaire. In 2021, Feeding Matters reached nearly 200,000 individuals in 50 states and 143 countries through their programs and website. To learn more about pediatric feeding disorder, visit [feedingmatters.org](http://www.feedingmatters.org) or follow us on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube at [@FeedingMatters](http://www.twitter.com/feedingmatters).

**Media Contacts:**

**Stephanie Sanstead**

Public Relations

[stephanie@communicadenceco.com](mailto:stephanie@communicadenceco.com)

602-476-9997

**Jaclyn Pederson, MHI**

Chief Executive Officer

Feeding Matters

[jpederson@feedingmatters.org](mailto:jpederson@feedingmatters.org)

602-690-6680