

Cast Members Celebrate Disney VoluntEAR of the Year

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., June 19, 2014 – With a surprise celebration, gleaming trophy and handshake from Mickey Mouse, Walt Disney World Cast Member Kristin Lehrer discovered she is the 2014 Disney VoluntEAR of the Year. As part of their ongoing commitment to serving the community, Disney Cast Members chose her for the coveted annual award, which includes a \$2,500 contribution to the charity of her choice.

“Kristin’s compassion and spirit of volunteerism is an inspiration to Cast Members throughout Central Florida,” said Nancy Gidusko, director of corporate citizenship for Walt Disney World Resort. “We’re proud to celebrate her contributions with one of our own – a \$2,500 donation to the Central Florida region of the Arthritis Foundation.”

From planning fundraising events, to serving on committees to advocating for families affected by juvenile arthritis, Lehrer’s volunteer work includes more than 60 hours of service to the Arthritis Foundation in the past year. A resource manager at Disney’s Animal Kingdom, Lehrer devotes much of her volunteer service to ensuring local children get the diagnosis, treatment and recovery they need.

“Arthritis is a personal challenge for me, so I believe in the Arthritis Foundation and its goals,” Lehrer said. “As a volunteer, my mission is to help promote health, wellness and fun for children affected by arthritis and other rheumatic diseases.”

Earlier this month, the Disney Cruise Line Port Canaveral Team also received a surprise visit by Mickey Mouse, who presented them with the Disney VoluntEAR Team of the Year award. In the past year, the team supported the nonprofit Sunshine Foundation, which fulfills dream requests for chronically ill, physically challenged and abused children. As part of this recognition, The Walt Disney Company presented the Sunshine Foundation with a \$2,500 donation on the team’s behalf.

The Disney VoluntEARS program started more than 30 years ago as a way for Cast Members to focus their volunteer efforts in a more meaningful way. Last year, Disney VoluntEARS gave more than 308,000 hours toward improving the lives of Central Floridians, ranging from donating millions of school supplies to local students, to serving more than 9,000 meals to the homeless.