



**The ALS Association**  
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## Media Release

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### **More than \$10 million raised for the fight against Lou Gehrig's Disease**

#### **Baseball Great Curt Schilling and Wife Shonda Enter**

#### **The ALS Association's Hall of Fame, Receive Award**

**CALABASAS HILLS, Calif. (May 14, 2009)** – The ALS Association has inducted former Major League Baseball pitcher Curt Schilling and his wife Shonda into the organization's Hall of Fame as its first inductees for their long time support of The Association in the fight against Lou Gehrig's Disease.

The award ceremony was held on Tuesday, May 12 during The Association's 2009 National Advocacy Day and Public Policy Conference in Washington, D.C., where they also were presented with the Hall of Fame Award.

[The Schillings](#) were recognized by The Association for their sustained and dedicated efforts in advocacy, awareness and fundraising, for significantly impacting research and patient care programs provided by The Association to find a cause and cure for ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), also commonly referred to as Lou Gehrig's Disease, and to improve quality of life for people living with the disease, their families and caregivers.

“Curt and Shonda Schilling have devoted virtually nonstop effort in support of The ALS Association's vital programs and services that have enriched the quality of life for people living with ALS,” said Jane H. Gilbert, president and CEO of The Association.

The Schillings, who have raised more than \$10 million for The Association through their “Curt's Pitch for ALS,” “Covering all the Bases” “Say It with Flowers,” and numerous other fundraisers, remain steadfast in their dedication to curing ALS. The Schillings also have played a vital role in The Association's advocacy efforts, including participating in Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill and testifying before Congress. The Schilling's outreach to Congress and the Administration on behalf of people with ALS helped build support for the ALS Registry Act, legislation signed into law in 2008 that will establish the first national ALS patient registry at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The registry is expected to collect vital information about the disease that will significantly advance the fight to find a treatment and cure.

“Shonda and I are both humbled and embarrassed to be accepting this award,” said Curt Schilling. “Humbled because we are profoundly proud that people feel we have made a difference in other people’s lives. Embarrassed because we have spent 20 years watching true heroes in this fight, battle every day with the disease known as ALS. The spirit, faith and love we have witnessed daily, from both patients and their families has been inspirational both personally and professionally.”

“So for those very people we stand here and offer our sincere thank you, but also want to insure that you all know we are accepting this on their behalf, for it’s on their shoulders we stand and it’s on their work we fight, we progress, and it’s on their commitment to the defeat of this deadly disease that we will one day stand here and make the statement ‘ALS has been beaten,’” Curt Schilling continued.

In 2001, Shonda Schilling received The Association’s prestigious Lawrence A. Rand Prize for her exemplary commitment to the fight against ALS. The entire Schilling family, including a son named Gehrig, appeared in The Association’s TV PSA entitled “Lighting the Way for a Cure.” While pitching in the 2004 World Series, Schilling wrote “K ALS” on his right shoe for the entire world TV audience to see. “K” stands for strike out.

“In 2004 it was reported that close to a billion people world wide watched as the Red Sox overcame insurmountable odds to defeat the NY Yankees, down three games to zero,” Curt Schilling said. “In game six they watched as my ankle bled, but more importantly they saw the term ‘K ALS’ written on my shoe. In some small way it was designed to say thank you to each and every family member, each and every ALS patient, each and every researcher, caregiver and doctor associated with finding a cure.”

Both Schillings became involved in the fight against ALS in 1992 after Curt Schilling, then a new member of the Philadelphia Phillies, met Dick Bergeron, who had ALS. “Put me to work. I want to get involved,” he said. The Schillings host parties each year for the many people with ALS they have befriended and for donors.

“The ALS Association owes Curt and Shonda Schilling a great debt of gratitude for their tremendous contribution to our vision and mission,” said Allen L. Finkelstein, the chairperson of The Association’s National Board of Trustees. “They are heroes in every sense of the word to the entire ALS community.”

The Association’s National ALS Advocacy Day and Public Policy Conference in Washington, D.C., is part of ALS Awareness Month in May, and is the single largest gathering of the entire ALS community. People with ALS, families, caregivers, physicians and researchers from across the country gather to urge members of Congress to join in the fight against the disease.

Throughout the month, The Association and its nationwide network of 42 chapters reach out to communities across the country to educate the public about Lou Gehrig’s Disease and urge people to join The Association in the fight to make ALS a disease of the past.

ALS causes the progressive death of the motor nerve cells that operate muscles, robbing the brain of its ability to initiate and control movement. Approximately 30,000 Americans have the disease, for which there is no effective treatment or cure, and can expect to survive on average two to five years from the time of diagnosis. While the disease strikes people regardless of their age, race or gender, military veterans are approximately twice as likely to develop ALS as those with no history of military service.

[The ALS Association](#) is the only non-profit organization fighting Lou Gehrig's Disease on every front. By leading the way in global research, providing assistance for people with ALS through a nationwide network of chapters, coordinating multidisciplinary care through certified clinical care centers, and fostering government partnerships, The Association builds hope and enhances quality of life while aggressively searching for new treatments and a cure.

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