



Health Awareness

Gretchen Wilson, Award-Winning Country Music Singer, Asks America To Join Her In The Fight Against Obesity

(NAPSA)—Gretchen Wilson, award-winning country music singer-songwriter and best-selling author, takes on the issue of obesity as the national spokesperson for “Country Bands Together.” The campaign aims to give people inspiration and practical tips for speaking with loved ones who are more than 100 pounds overweight about the physical and life-threatening impact of obesity and effective treatment options beyond diet and exercise alone.

Wilson has personally seen the impact of severe obesity among her loved ones and fans, and knows just how important the support of a loved one can be in helping people to get on the right track. “We all have things in our lives we need to work on to be healthier and happier; for me, smoking and getting my GED are two of the greatest challenges I had to overcome,” says Wilson. “However, for some people, like my close friend and daughter’s nanny Tammy, their greatest challenge in life is weight.”

Tammy tried for years through diet and exercise programs, but nothing enabled her to lose weight and keep it off long term. It made Wilson so sad to watch Tammy struggle with her weight and so Gretchen decided she could no longer be silent. Wilson proactively intervened and spoke with Tammy about her weight.

“My conversation with Gretchen was a life-changing moment,” says Tammy. “The fact that she had the courage to talk with me about my weight and potential options made me realize that I



Having a Courageous Conversation led Tammy, friend and nanny to the child of country singer-songwriter Gretchen Wilson, to address weight loss.

finally, with the support of family and friends, could win my battle with weight.”

As a result of their conversation, Tammy consulted with her physician and chose to get the LAP-BAND AP® Adjustable Gastric Banding System, the first U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved adjustable gastric band and most advanced technology available in gastric banding for use in weight reduction in severely obese adults. Happy to have helped her friend, Wilson is now committed to inspiring others.

“With the growing number of people in the United States fighting this battle, there’s a good chance you know someone struggling with obesity,” says Gretchen. “If you do, the time to speak is now. That’s exactly what I did, and I know you can, too.”

Obesity has evolved into a global epidemic. Today, approxi-

mately 60 million adults are considered obese and 9 million are severely obese. In fact, obesity can cause significant health issues, such as type 2 diabetes, and is the second leading cause of preventable death after smoking.

While obesity is now recognized by leading government health authorities, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Institutes of Health (NIH), as a disease, unfortunately, treating it remains a challenge. The NIH reports that people in weight-loss programs lose only about 10 percent of their body weight and gain most of it back within five years. For people who are morbidly obese, or more than 100 pounds overweight, weight-loss surgery has become a clinically accepted effective treatment option for long-term weight control.

“For many of my patients struggling with severe obesity, the support of a loved one is often their catalyst for change. To be effective in speaking with loved ones about weight loss, people should discuss the facts about effective treatment options, like the LAP-BAND AP® System,” says Charles Morton, M.D., P.C., F.A.C.S., medical director, Metabolic Surgery Center, Baptist Hospital.

To learn more about “Country Bands Together,” an obesity health education initiative sponsored by Allergan, Inc., and to take a pledge to have a Courageous Conversation with a loved one about weight loss, visit www.CountryBandsTogether.com.