

# **MLB Legend Ryan Zimmerman, The Annual Congressional Baseball Game, and NWSL Champion Washington Spirit to be Recognized at Fight For Children Honors 2023**

*Platinum-Selling O.A.R. Headlines the Annual Charity Event Supporting Underserved Youth in the Region*

WASHINGTON, DC March 30, 2023 – Fight For Children announced today that Washington Nationals legend Ryan Zimmerman, the annual bipartisan Congressional Baseball Game, and the hometown champion Washington Spirit of the NWSL will be honored for their social impact and inspiring actions during the star-studded Fight For Children Honors gala at the Anthem in Washington, DC on Thursday, May 4, 2023. Headlining the entertainment will be platinum-certified rock band O.A.R. with a special performance by former "The Voice" finalist Laith Al-Saadi.

Described as a cross between Fight Night and The Kennedy Center Honors, business and community leaders along with athletes and celebrities, gather in the nation's capital to celebrate those who have harnessed the power of sports for social good during an evening of entertainment, camaraderie, and fun. The gala attracts thousands of the DC area's most influential figures, and all proceeds support Fight For Children's programs benefiting underprivileged youth across the region.

Fight For Children retired its flagship charity event, Fight Night, following three decades and more than \$73 million raised to support youth from underserved communities. In its place, the organization launched Fight For Children Honors, which has become one of the most coveted charity galas in the region.

"Sports bring people together like very few things can," said Keith Gordon, Fight For Children's President & CEO, "each of our honorees has had an incredible impact upon the community, and exemplifies the true power of sports for social impact."

World-class entertainment is a hallmark of Fight For Children's events, and this year is no exception. Rockville, Maryland's own O.A.R. will take the stage as the headline act, offering their signature sound to the night's festivities. During their 25 years, O.A.R. has become known as music's biggest and best-kept secret, having sold out iconic venues like Madison Square Garden and Red Rocks Amphitheater while earning three consecutive Top 15 debuts on the Billboard Top 200. Their live performances are widely regarded as some of the most captivating in the industry. But the band's commitment to making a difference extends beyond their music. Through their "Heard The World Fund," O.A.R. has shown a strong dedication to supporting youth, education, and underserved communities across the United States.

In addition to O.A.R.'s headline performance, the evening will also feature musical performances by Laith Al-Saadi, Season 10 finalist of NBC's hit show "The Voice." For decades, Al-Saadi has been captivating audiences across the country with his authentic blend of blues, soul, and classic rock. Entertainment Weekly has hailed him as "a power performer who is so legitimate and memorable," while his chart-topping albums "In the Round" and "Long Time Coming" have cemented his status as a beloved musician.

More on this year's Fight For Children Honors recipients:

Hailed as “Mr. National”, Ryan Zimmerman was an All-Star, Gold Glove and Silver Slugger winner, Comeback Player of the Year and World Series champion. He was the Washington Nationals’ first choice in the 2005 MLB Draft and went on to play 17 seasons including the championship season of 2019. While cementing his baseball legacy, Zimmerman has also been a leader in the fight to cure Multiple Sclerosis through the ziMS Foundation, which he founded in 2006. As the organization’s President, he continues to utilize his platform to engage, educate, inspire, give back, and leave an indelible mark upon the community he calls home.

For over a century, the Congressional Baseball Game has been a cherished, bipartisan event beloved and enjoyed by thousands. Members of Congress from both parties strengthen their friendships on and off the field at the annual Congressional Baseball Game. The game's success has led to the establishment of the Congressional Sports for Charity foundation, and is one of the region's top philanthropic events, benefiting dozens of local organizations.

Under the leadership of Majority Owner Michele Kang, the Washington Spirit strives to redefine professional soccer by elevating and advancing opportunities for women. The team’s unwavering commitment to achieve the best results led the Washington Spirit to its first NWSL championship in 2021. Off the field, the Spirit launched the Washington Coalition of Women’s Professional Sports. In partnership with Leveling the Playing Field, the coalition has collected and distributed over 10,000 sports bras to keep girls in the game. The Spirit is also a long standing supporter of DC Scores and its mission to use soccer as a vehicle to promote youth development.

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### **About Fight For Children**

Fight For Children (FFC) was founded in 1990 by the late Joseph E. Robert Jr. to improve the lives of children in the nation’s capital. FFC has impacted the lives of more than 400,000 children through improvements in healthcare, education and policy. FFC’s mission is to help individuals, organizations, and communities leverage the power of sports to improve the lives of underserved youth. FFC achieves this through the [Fight For Children Youth Development Institute](#), the region’s first and only sports-based youth development collaborative, and the [Fight For Children Sports Medicine Center at Children’s National](#), the region’s first and only pediatric sports medicine facility. For information visit [www.fightforchildren.org](http://www.fightforchildren.org).

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