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## **Cheer for a Cause introduces us to Patty & Cassidy, supports Cheer Safety and Purple Day for Epilepsy**

*Patty will never walk or talk again. Three years ago, she was just 17 and her stunt group cradled her from a liberty. When they did, Patty was hit in the chest and her heart stopped. She went nearly 30 minutes without oxygen to her brain. And she needs our help.*

*Cassidy is a 12-year old cheerleader living with epilepsy. She created Purple Day for Epilepsy (Purple Day) held every year on March 26 to increase awareness and dispel myths about one of the most common neurological disorders.*

**Lake Mary, Florida, March 8, 2011** – This is Cheer Safety Month. In March, Cheer for a Cause will introduce us to Patty Phommanyvong and Cassidy Megan, and join our industry to support safety education, sportsmanship, Purple Day and epilepsy awareness.

***Please help Cheer for a Cause provide a van for Patty's family.*** Many may think of it as just another stunt, a liberty cradled on the sideline. But for Patty, this liberty was anything but routine. She had only cheered seven weeks, and this catch stopped her heart and changed her life forever. She is now unable to walk or talk or eat on her own. Her pending case is complicated and alleges a defibrillator was not working properly at her California high school and by the time an ambulance arrived and the EMT's got her heart beating, nearly 30 minutes had passed. Her case also claims her coach was improperly trained and her stunt group was too inexperienced to perform the advanced stunt.

Patty's family needs a reliable van to take her to and from doctor appointments. Her family of four lives in a small two-bedroom apartment. After the accident, Patty's parents lost their tailoring business. Mom now works nights in a factory and dad stays home to care for Patty. The financial strain is tremendous.

*Julie Bolton, founder of Cheer for a Cause said, "The heart of our Cheer World is at its most compassionate when one of our own is catastrophically injured."*

Cheer for a Cause is partnering with the National Cheer Safety Foundation and hopes to raise \$20,000 in March to help Patty and her family get a van. You can find a link on the Cheer for a Cause website to make a tax-deductible gift. 100% of donations will go direct to the van fund.

***Join the Cheer & Dance World on March 26 and Wear Purple for Epilepsy.*** Cassidy Megan is a 12-year-old allstar cheerleader from Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada and cheers for West Halifax Cheer. Cassidy, who lives with epilepsy, created *Purple Day for Epilepsy (Purple Day)* held every year on March 26 to increase awareness and dispel myths about one of the most common neurological disorders. Visit the Cheer for a Cause website to find more information about Purple Day, learn about epilepsy and find out what to do when someone has a seizure.

*“Purple Day helps people understand that not all seizures are the same, and that people with epilepsy are ordinary people just like everybody else,” said Cassidy Megan, the founder of Purple Day. “Purple Day also reminds people living with epilepsy that they aren’t alone. That’s why we wear purple, the international colour for epilepsy.”*

Epilepsy affects three million Americans, 300,000 people in Canada and over 50 million people worldwide, which is more than multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy and Parkinson’s disease combined. Despite its prevalence, epilepsy is not well understood and people with epilepsy continue to face social stigma and discrimination.

**What’s your cause?** Cheer for a Cause will support special needs teams in April and May, anti-bullying in June, our troops in July, safe driving in August and children’s cancer in September. Their website features the monthly section “Stories of Hope, Healing & Heart”. Teams and athletes are encouraged to share stories, send in photos and video. To partner on a cause or share your story, email [weshare@cheerforacause.org](mailto:weshare@cheerforacause.org).

Cheer for a Cause is a nonprofit corporation. Their mission is to unite the giving and giving back in the cheer and dance world, celebrate efforts to help others, unify support for athletes and teams experiencing tragedy and raise awareness and funds for causes. You can find Cheer for a Cause at [www.cheerforacause.org](http://www.cheerforacause.org), on facebook and twitter.

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