



Children's Brain
Tumor Project
powered by families



Weill Cornell
Medicine

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"The Cristian Rivera Foundation (CRF) is the cornerstone of my research into Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG). We are partners in this crusade, and together we have made tremendous progress toward curing children with DIPG. I couldn't do this critical work without the generosity of their donors and the steadfast commitment of the CRF Board of Directors. I am forever grateful to the members of this organization."
- Dr. Mark Souweidane

For the Third Consecutive Year, the Cristian Rivera Foundation Makes Another Record-Breaking Donation to DIPG Research Following 14th Annual Celebrity Gala

Leading Supporter of Dr. Mark Souweidane's Research Lab Continues to Increase its Investment in Saving the Lives of Children with DIPG

Darlene Rodriguez, a dedicated member of the Cristian Rivera Foundation (CRF) Board of Directors and a prominent anchor on NBC's *Today in New York*, shared a meaningful moment with organization founder John Rivera during a special visit to Weill Cornell Medicine on December 12th. Together, they presented Dr. Mark Souweidane with an extraordinary gift of \$351,000. Over the last three years alone, CRF has donated a total of more than \$1,000,000 to his lab. This generous contribution represents the large majority of annual funding needed to support Dr. Souweidane's groundbreaking research into diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma (DIPG), a devastating pediatric brain tumor that is considered universally fatal.

The donation was largely fueled by the resounding success of the 14th Annual Cristian Rivera Foundation Celebrity Gala. This sold-out event, held at Capitale on November 15 in New York City, captivated attendees with its star-studded charm. Distinguished hosts included Board Member and Actor Kenan Thompson, Board Member and Actor Luis Guzman, Actor Malik Yoba, and of course, Darlene Rodriguez.

The gala, brimming with hope as its central theme, celebrated several luminaries who have made a significant impact in the fight against

DIPG. Alongside Dr. Souweidane, this year's honorees included Major League Baseball star Harrison Bader, CRF Executive Board Member and owner of Pulse International Realty Rena Kliot, and DIPG warrior and advocate Maria Kuenster.

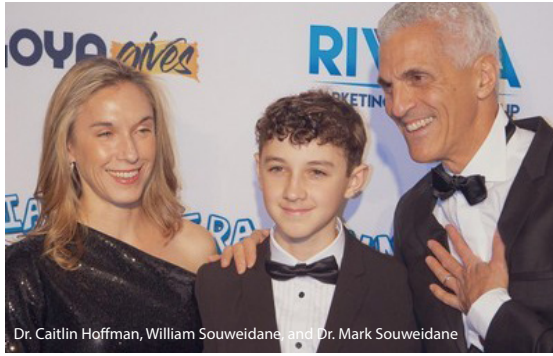
Music producer, promoter, and business empresario John Gungie Rivera has been raising money to find a cure for DIPG ever since he lost his son Cristian to the rare and uniformly fatal brain stem tumor in 2009. Cristian was only 6 years old. Driven to support the work of Dr. Souweidane, who treated his son, John Gungie Rivera created the Cristian Rivera Foundation and became the very first donor to his dedicated DIPG research fund in 2011.

"Thankfully, I have a wonderful board and event committee who help make this possible, including our chairwoman Melinda Cox, and board members Darlene Rodriguez, Rena Kliot, Jarrad Seufferling, Rafael Toro, Gio Urshela, AJ Calloway, Luis Guzman, and Kenan Thompson, who always show up for this most important cause," said Rivera.

To learn more about the Cristian Rivera Foundation and to make a donation, please visit cristianriverafoundation.org.



Rena Klitz



Dr. Caitlin Hoffman, William Souweidane, and Dr. Mark Souweidane



Harrison Bader and John Rivera



Back row (left to right): Claudia and Fernando Desa, Luis Guzman, David Rodriguez, Darlene Rodriguez, and John Rivera.
Front row: Sophia and Stephanie Rivera



Darlene Rodriguez



John Rivera and Emiliano Bermejo



Carlos Colon, Melinda Colon Cox, and John Rivera



John Rivera and Kenan Thompson



John Rivera and AJ Calloway



Darlene Rodriguez and Luis Guzman



Lauren Velez and John Rivera



Rodriguez and ...



Kevin and Melinda Cox



Dr. Mark Souweidane