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## Jeff Blau to be honored at annual Modell Foundation Spring gala

By JASON TURCOTTE

Primary Immunodeficiency's biggest supporters will gather at Cipriani for the Jeffrey Modell Foundation's (JMF) annual Spring Ahead Gala. The foundation is honoring Jeff Blau, president of Related Companies and staunch supporter of JMF, as "Man of the Year" at this year's event.

Primary Immunodeficiency (PI), is a term for genetic defects that, while sometimes are benign, can also be chronic and life threatening. Fred and Vicki Modell launched JMF after their son, Jeffrey, died due to complications from PI at the age of 15. Since its inception, the organization has raised more than \$100 million for the cause. And since the foundation's first gala, held in 1993, the real estate industry has been the backbone of this charity's efforts.

"We know this group has the ability to write checks and attend galas, but what people don't realize is that their commitment has gone beyond that," Fred Modell said. "They want to know how they have changed the lives of the patients, especially the children."

Major supporters include David Greenbaum, of Vornado; Bruce Mosler, of Cushman & Wakefield; Stephen Siegel, of CBRE; Steven Witkoff, of The Witkoff Group; Tod Waterman; Arnold Penner; and Jonathan Mechanic, of Fried, Frank, Harris. Blau joins a distinguished list of past "Man of the Year" recipients that include Robert Alexander, of CBRE, and Ric Clark, of Brookfield Properties.

With such tremendous support from the real estate industry, JMF has not only been able to raise funds and raise awareness but the organization has also established numerous PI research facilities. JMF has founded 37 Jeffrey Modell Diagnostic and Research Centers and 200 referral centers in 14 countries in 28 cities including, Dusseldorf, Toronto, Shanghai, Tokyo, San Francisco, New Orleans, Zurich and several other locations. The organization also operates more than 200 referral centers.

For 16 years Blau has overseen developments in nearly every sector of the industry for Related, totaling \$16 billion worth of projects. He is responsible for new development origination and strategic

oversight of Related's affiliated companies. He is also a managing trustee of Centerline, and American Mortgage Acceptance Company. A graduate of the University of Michigan, Blau also holds a Master of business administration from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He is involved in several other charitable endeavors, serving on the boards of the Union Square Partnership and ABO. He is also a member of the visiting committee at the University of Michigan's Stephen M. Ross School of Business. "The work Vicki, Fred and the entire foundation board and staff do to support worldwide research and advocacy, education initiatives for the medical industry and patient programs for the Primary Immunodeficient community is invaluable," Blau said. "The foundation has touched countless lives and I am honored to be playing a role in their vital cause."

Ross, CEO and chairman of Related, also chairs the Spring Ahead Gala. This year's event – which includes a night of dancing, dinner, raffles and surprises – has a "State Fair" theme.

Attire is business for gentleman and festive cocktail, for ladies. The gala will be held on Thursday, April 24 at 8 p.m., with cocktail hour beginning at 7 p.m., at Cipriani, 110 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. Tickets start at \$1,000; and \$500 for young friends 35 and under. For more information or to purchase tickets contact Malisa Meresman at 212-580-0835 or e-mail malissa@rchcpr.com.



JEFF BLAU