

For Your Information

CONTACT: Bonnie Reuben (310) 248-3852
Bonnie@BonnieReuben.com

ITM HOSPITALITY FUND

www.itmhospitalityfund.com

email: info@itmhospitalityfund.com

FACT SHEET

Fund Profile: The ITM Hospitality Fund provides free hotel rooms to needy patients and their families who travel to New York City for urgent medical treatment. The program has partnered with more than a dozen New York area medical centers to donate first-class hotel accommodations to patients being treated at these facilities, and/or their families. It is the only citywide program of its kind in the United States.

Benefits: With the provision of free hotel rooms for up to four nights, the Fund helps to minimize out-of-pocket expenses and reduce the stress associated with hospital stays, ambulatory therapies, doctors' visits, and traveling for medical necessity, while easing this difficult time for patients by encouraging the presence of their loved ones.

Founded: Co-founded in February 2002 by Jody Merl, President of Innovative Travel Marketing (ITM), a leading barter company specializing in hotel/travel advertising and marketing, and Michael Stoler, an active health-care philanthropist and business leader. Jody established the Fund with an endowment of NYC hotel rooms from her ITM barter inventory, and she continues to maintain the Fund with room donations.

Rationale/Philosophy: Thousands of people from throughout the US and other countries, travel to New York City each year for treatment for life-threatening medical conditions, lured by the city's pioneering health care institutions. The founders of the ITM Hospitality Fund realized how important free lodging, convenient to treatment facilities, could be for needy patients and their families, and decided to use barter for a meaningful cause by donating hotel room inventory for those facing hardship.

Research has shown that patients fare better during treatment and recovery when their loved ones are in close proximity. However, with escalating medical costs and restrictions imposed by health insurance coverage, patients and their

families often have difficulty paying for medical treatments, let alone the expenses involved in health-care-related travel. For many patients and their families, paying for hotel accommodations in New York City is simply not an option. By making comfortable, convenient hotel rooms available to those who could otherwise not afford them, the ITM Hospitality Fund encourages patients and their families to be together at a time when the presence of family is most crucial. In doing so, the Fund serves to ease the stress and trauma that affect patients and their loved ones during the course of treatment and recovery.

Patients/Beneficiaries: More than 300 patients to date, with their families, have been helped by the ITM Hospitality Fund. The Fund assists those who travel to New York City for critical medical treatment, including organ transplantation and therapies for life-threatening illness such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, and neurological disorders. Patients and their families are eligible for the program based primarily on financial need, with geographical distance from New York also a consideration.

The cost of the program to beneficiaries is limited to New York State and City hotel occupancy and sales tax for the hotel room. Any other hotel services that the patient or family uses are their responsibility and billed at prevailing rates.

Referrals: Patients must be referred to the program through participating hospitals and medical centers via physicians, social workers or other staff members.

Medical Facilities: Participating medical facilities include:

- NYU Medical Center
- Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
- Mount Sinai Medical Center
- New York-Presbyterian Hospital
- St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center
- Lenox Hill Hospital
- Manhattan Eye and Ear
- Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine of NYU Medical Center
- Stephen D. Hassenfield Children's Center of NYU Medical Center
- American Cancer Society
- North Shore Long Island Jewish Medical Center
- Hospital for Joint Diseases
- Montefiore Medical Center
- Jacobi Hospital

Awards and Distinctions:

- Jody Merl and Michael Stoler named “**New Yorkers of the Week**” by **New York 1 News** (Sept. 2003), a leading local cable news affiliate for the New York Metro area, for their creation of the ITM Hospitality Fund.
- ITM Hospitality Fund recognized with **HSMIA Golden Bell Award for Community Service** (2004).

Founders’ Bios:

Jody B. Merl

- President of Innovative Travel Marketing (ITM), a leading barter company specializing in hotel/travel advertising and marketing.
- Member of the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMIA) - Big Apple Chapter, where she served on the executive board. Honored with the Chapter’s *Professional of the Year* award for 2004.
- Member of the Association of Travel Marketing Executives, American Hotel and Lodging Association, and NYC & Co., the Convention and Visitors Bureau of New York City.

Michael R. Stoler

- Vice President of First American Title Insurance Company of New York; Senior Advisor to Private Client Services of Signature Bank
- Associate Member of the Board of Trustees, NYU Medical Center
- Member of the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees, Hospital for Joint Diseases and Orthopedic Institute
- Member of Executive Committee and Trustee of the New York College of Podiatric Medicine, member of NY Presbyterian System, and Affiliate of Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons.

For more information: Go to www.itmhospitalityfund.com
E-mail: info@itmhospitalityfund.com or

NYC Hotels/ To Make Room Night Donations: Contact: Jody Merl at (973) 331-8171
or jody@innovativetravelmarketing.com