

Spirit of Beauty Luncheon

June 2, 2016

Thank you Ann for those incredibly kind words and good afternoon everyone. Thank you for taking time out of your busy day to be here for this year's Spirit of Beauty Luncheon.

First, Ann. It is so touching that you are here to give me this award. But not surprising. Because for me, like for so many in this room, you have always been there – as an inspiration and a trusted partner. And to me, you are a mentor and dear friend.

I am honored and delighted to accept the Spirit of Beauty Award on behalf of my colleagues throughout the COTY family. I'm particularly humbled to be in such good company as my fellow honoree, Nicolas Mirzayantz and IFF. Nicolas is someone I admire and respect and IFF is a fantastic partner. Together, along with Ann, we have created many beautiful fragrances.

Two weeks ago, the March of Dimes arranged for **Nicholas and I to tour the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (the NICU) at NYU Medical Center. I, like many of you, had heard what an amazing facility it is.**

But there is nothing quite like experiencing it up close and seeing more than **two dozen tiny babies – so many of them facing life threatening situations – and hearing first hand from the talented and dedicated staff, the stories of these miraculous babies.**

Thanks so much to Dr. Hoskins and Dr. Espiritu for taking the time to show us the great work done at the NICU – and for all they do on behalf of the March of Dimes.

At first I entered the NICU feeling uneasy and full of emotions, such tiny babies, so many tubes and monitors. It was a bit overwhelming.

But what struck me about the unit was not just the quality of its state-of-the-art equipment and the extremely capable staff, but also what I'd call the softer skills—just how very good they are with communicating and dealing with the families- the palpable care and sheer warmth of everyone involved.

Since our visit, one particular image resonates. For me, an image just as powerful as the babies themselves...Before we left the NICU, I noticed a bulletin board chock full of **dozens of photos that made me stop and take notice. Upon closer inspection, I realized they were holiday cards.**

My first thought was about my own experience with my family's annual holiday cards – You mom and dads in the room may know just the feeling – how difficult it can be to get your kids to smile just right, and at the same time, to make sure the family's outfits are coordinated and everyone's hair is in place.

But then what hit me -- and what I keep coming back to -- is the wonderful collection of hundreds of smiling, beautiful children in those photos.

Children who likely benefited from the great work done in the NICU -- either directly themselves or through the work on behalf of their siblings. I did not look at their clothes or their hair or the background. I just looked at them – their smiles, their joy.

If it weren't for the NICU- and all the great work the March of Dimes does everyday to improve the health of babies, so many of them would not be able to grow into the healthy beautiful children I saw in those photos.

(pause)

While I don't have personal experience with a child in the NICU, I do know based on my family's situation, just how terrifying it is when a doctor tells you that your baby has serious issues.

I am so grateful for your support of the March of Dimes. The work they do to prevent birth defects and premature birth is truly remarkable. The proceeds raised here today are used to fund much-needed research. Over the long proud history of this event, over \$34 million has already been raised. Funds that have led to new treatments, new breakthroughs, new ways to save countless little lives.

When we all go back to the office and the chaos of endless meetings, hundreds of emails and impending deadlines, we know that we are all doing our part to make women look and feel beautiful.

The work the March of Dimes does truly embodies the spirit of beauty, and ensures that all children can live and lead beautiful lives. How wonderful that our industry can support such a tremendous cause.

Thank you again to the March of Dimes for recognizing me and my COTY family, many of whom are here to share in this award with me today.

For the love and support I am so blessed to receive, my final and most heartfelt thanks go to MY own beautiful family who are here this afternoon-my husband Mike, my sons Danny and Dylan, my parents, my brother and sister in law and my circle of lifelong friends. Thank you!