

06/29/09 8:13 PM ET

Malfara honored as All-Star Among Us

Mother to be recognized for her efforts with leukodystrophy

By Tom Singer / MLB.com

After thousands of nominees from across the United States and Canada were narrowed to 90 finalists, Major League Baseball and PEOPLE have announced the 30 winners of the "All-Stars Among Us" campaign, which spotlights people who have gone above and beyond to serve their communities.

The Florida Marlins' "All-Star" is Kristen Malfara of Melbourne Beach, Fla., chosen by fans across the nation for her pro-action on behalf of families with children suffering from leukodystrophy.

Malfara was moved to action after her own son was diagnosed with the illness. The result was the M.O.R.G.A.N. Project, which provides parents caring for special-needs children with information, equipment and grants.

Malfara and the rest of the winners will be honored during the pregame ceremony at the 2009 MLB All-Star Game in St. Louis on July 14 on FOX, at which President Barack Obama will throw out the ceremonial first pitch. One club representative also will be featured in People Magazine.

Nearly three quarters of a million votes were cast by fans across the nation in the **All-Stars Among Us** campaign to select the 30 "All-Stars Among Us" winners -- one per Major League team -- out of the pool of 90 finalists who are serving as leaders within their communities.

The other finalists for the Marlins were:

- Linda Watts of Leesburg, Fla., who has mentored hundreds of students by mobilizing them to help others. She founded Florida's Hometown USA Program in 1986 to teach young people the importance of community service. Watts' efforts are succeeding in improving the lives of countless people in nursing homes, hospitals, shelters and schools across the state.
- Robert Kasky of Boca Raton, Fla., the president of a non-profit adoption agency in South Florida. For the past 40 years, he has helped place over 2,000 babies in loving, stable homes.

Meanwhile, vote for your favorite players with the [2009 All-Star Game Sprint Online Ballot](#) at MLB.com and all 30 sites.

The 80th Major League Baseball All-Star Game will be televised nationally by FOX Sports, in Canada by Rogers Sportsnet and Sportsnet HD and televised around the world by Major League Baseball International, with pregame ceremonies beginning at 8 p.m. ET. ESPN Radio will provide exclusive national radio coverage, while MLB.com will provide extensive online coverage.

Tom Singer is a reporter for MLB.com. This story was not subject to the approval of Major League Baseball or its clubs.

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