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For Immediate Release

Wife of Big Show Host Chris Spielman Passes *Stefanie Spielman Loses 11 Year Battle with Breast Cancer*

Columbus—Stefanie Spielman, wife of former Ohio State and National Football League star Chris Spielman, passed away this evening after a long and courageous battle with breast cancer. The following is the official statement from the family followed by a special request from the family.

Stefanie Spielman, who waged a courageous, public battle with breast cancer for more than 11 years, died at 6:15pm this evening at her home in Upper Arlington, Ohio, surrounded by her family. She was 42 years of age.

Survivors include her husband of 20 years: Chris; and their four children: Madison (15), Noah (13), Macy (8) and Audrey (7); mother, Myra Belcher of Upper Arlington; sisters Sue (Bill) Fitz of Upper Arlington, Sandy Belcher of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and Cindy Belcher of Bangor, California. Stefanie's father, Richard, preceded her in death in 1987.

Stefanie's husband Chris released this statement a short time ago. "Stefanie has gone home to be with the lord. And for that we celebrate, but with broken hearts. I want to thank everyone for their support over the last 12 years. Together with your help, hopefully we made a difference in this fight."

Public calling hours will be Monday November 23, 2009 at the Longaberger Alumni House on the campus of The Ohio State University from 1-8pm for those inspired by Stefanie's life and her service to the community. A celebration of life memorial service will be held Tuesday at Trinity United Methodist Church in Grandview.

"We have lost a leader in the fight against cancer," seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong said. "Stefanie was a living example of courage and strength to everyone around her. Her perseverance was unmatched. While the cancer community marks her passing, my family and I will keep the Spielman's in our thoughts as they say goodbye to their beloved wife and mother. For her sake, we will continue the battle she fought against a disease that claims too many women all over the world."

First diagnosed with breast cancer in July of 1998, Stefanie joined with her husband -- an All-American linebacker at Ohio State University, 10-year veteran of the National Football League and current ESPN college football analyst -- to emphasize the importance of early detection, education and prevention.

The Stefanie Spielman Fund for Breast Cancer Research at the Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute grew from the Spielman's willingness to discuss her condition publicly.

Launched in 1998, the fund's original goal of \$250,000 was easily surpassed in the first six months, during which more than \$1 million was raised. The fund's signature event, Stefanie's Champions Luncheon, was created to annually honor six recipients for their encouragement and care toward cancer patients during diagnosis and treatment.

Stefanie gave her husband the first Champions award for his unwavering support, which included him taking a one-year break from the NFL in 1998 to care for her during her initial treatment.

To date, more than \$6.5 million has been contributed to the Stefanie Spielman Fund, which will support the Stefanie Spielman Endowed Professorship in Breast Cancer Research at Ohio State's Comprehensive Cancer Center. The position will focus on translating discoveries made in the laboratory into treatments for breast cancer patients.

The fund also supports researchers in OSU School of Pharmacy and the Comprehensive Cancer Center who are discovering, developing and testing new drugs for breast cancer in clinical trials.

Contributions from an array of fundraising events like Christmas to Cure Cancer, the Buckeye Cruise for Cancer, the Spielman Scramble and as individual as bake sales and neighborhood lemonade stands have enabled the Spielman Fund to also create a cancer tissue archive service and tumor bank at The James, providing an invaluable resource to breast cancer research.

"Not only did Stefanie Spielman create the Stefanie's Champions annual event to honor cancer caregivers, but through her tireless devotion and advocacy for more research into the prevention and treatment of breast cancer, she helped raise more than \$6.5 million for cancer research through the Stefanie Spielman Fund for Breast Cancer Research at The James," said Dr. Michael Caligiuri, director of The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center and chief executive officer of the James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute; "She will be missed, but never forgotten. Her passion and commitment will live on for generations to come. She's truly a champion."

The Spielman's also started the Stefanie Spielman Fund Patient Assistance Fund, which provides assistance to breast cancer patients and their families who may be experiencing financial challenges associated with treatment.

"Through her remarkable grace and compassion for others, Stefanie Spielman taught all of us powerful lessons about the human capacity for love and courage," said Dr. E. Gordon Gee, president of The Ohio State University. "She was an extraordinary person and one of the University's firmest of friends. We were deeply proud to be able to celebrate her accomplishments, and those of Chris and their wonderful family, during a ceremony at one of

our football games this fall. I was blessed to know Stefanie, to witness her good work, and to count her as a friend. We will miss her mightily.”

Stefanie survived four bouts with cancer before a fifth recurrence in March resulted in another round of aggressive treatment. That did not deter her trademark positive attitude and appreciation for the blessings she was always quick to acknowledge, while remaining steadfast in her belief that education is the best weapon against breast cancer and research is the key to an eventual cure.

A 1989 Ohio State graduate with a degree in journalism, the former Stefanie Belcher married Chris Spielman on June 24, 1989.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Stefanie Spielman Fund for Breast Cancer Research or the Stefanie Spielman Fund Patient Assistance Fund at the Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute. Contributions to either fund should be sent to the James Development Office, 660 Ackerman Road, P.O. Box 183112, Columbus, Ohio 43218-3112.

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