

# “Havana Nights” 3rd Annual Miami Fundraiser for NAAF

Submitted by Deirdre Nero, Resident and Secretary of the National Alopecia Acreata Foundation (NAAF)



Close your eyes, think of a typical “Havana Nights” evening walking through the streets of an island once named by Christopher Columbus as “the most beautiful island in the world”. You are walking down the streets of Old Havana, the sounds of salsa music are being heard from every corner. To the left you see a formed circle with men wearing their

best guayaberas and women wearing vibrant dresses and fresh flowers in their hair dancing salsa to the music of Celia Cruz and Willy Chirino. The smell of freshly brewed Cuban coffee and Cuban cigars entice your senses as you hear the clinking sounds of dominoes being slammed on the table by the self-proclaimed “Masters” of the game. Now imagine that scene in the streets of Miami and picture guests eating delicious Cuban food, drinking mojitos, rum and cokes, smoking cigars and playing casino night games all evening. This vision will come to life for this year’s theme of the 3rd Annual Miami Fundraiser for the National Alopecia Acreata Foundation taking place on Saturday, November 17th at 7pm at the Coral Gables Museum, 285 Aragon Ave, Coral Gables, FL 33134.

The National Alopecia Acreata Foundation, or NAAF, is a nonprofit organization that serves the community of 6.8 million people in the U.S. affected by alopecia areata. Alopecia areata is an autoimmune skin disease that results in hair loss and emotional pain. NAAF has been at the forefront in supporting research to find a treatment or cure for alopecia areata by conducting clinical trials, holding research summits and more. In addition to supporting research to find treatment or a cure, NAAF also supports those afflicted with the disease by establishing support groups, providing resources for parents of children with alopecia areata, and through a young mentor program. Lastly, NAAF educates the public about alopecia areata with local awareness events and through their Annual NAAF Conference.

Deirdre Nero is no stranger to the hair loss and the emotional pain of alopecia areata. She has been living with alopecia areata for 20 years, almost half of her life. In the September issue of Gables Living, Deirdre explained how she was able to heal, gain confidence and support others with alopecia areata: “I have been able to turn something negative in my life into something positive and empowering, instead of hiding and coping alone in silence.” Deirdre serves as the Secretary of the Board of Directors for NAAF as well as a Legislative Liaison and Miami Support Group Leader. She also supports NAAF by doing advocacy work on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Earlier this year, Deirdre met with Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, who cosponsored legislation that would provide coverage of medically necessary wigs as durable medical equipment under Medicare. Deirdre also has been involved with NAAF on a local level, here in South Florida, by throwing the Annual

Miami Fundraiser for NAAF every year for the past two years. For the third year, Deirdre hopes that the fundraiser will be a huge success to help raise money for NAAF so that NAAF can continue their work on a national (and global) level.

If you’re interested in joining Deirdre on November 17th for an entertaining Havana Night and to show your support for NAAF, you may purchase your tickets at <http://havananights2018naaf.eventbrite.com>. Admission price is \$150. Guests will enjoy an evening of casino games and dominoes, an open bar, delicious Cuban food sponsored by Latin Mix Restaurant & Cafeteria, music, dancing, a fun photo booth, a cigar roller, shoe shining station, and networking with some of Miami’s finest. There will be a silent auction with many fantastic items to choose from, including a Casino Grand Prize. The night is Havana Nights themed and guests are encouraged (but not required) to dress up and show off their Cuban style!

In addition to attending the event (especially to those interested in becoming more involved), there are several sponsorship opportunities available! In-kind, monetary, and silent auction donors are needed. For more information, please contact Deirdre at [dnero@neroimmigration.com](mailto:dnero@neroimmigration.com).

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