**PRESENTATION SPEECH**

**FOR**

**GABRIEL GROSSMAN**

Hello everyone... I'm Gabriel Grossman and tonight I have the rare and special privilege to present a very coveted award to two of the best people I know ... and as luck would have it, they just happen to be my parents, Susan and Jay Grossman. To know and appreciate the energy, dedication, time, compassion, and yes, probably some "**coin**" (**Wait for the laugh**) they have brought to the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America is to get just a small glimpse of the love and support they've given to both me and my brother, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ throughout our entire lives. The theme of tonight's event is "Laugh til it Stops Hurting." My parents were and are there for me at every turn, every event, every milestone, every corner, every activity and every doctor's appointment..... It reminds me of something Jerry Seinfeld once said.... " to me, life boils down to one thing. It's **movement**...." of course that takes on a slightly different meaning in this crowd.... (**Wait for the laugh**). All jokes aside, although I may have Crohn's and although my parents have been completely involved in helping me sustain my well-being, Crohn's has **never** "had me." My parents made sure of that. As the son of Susan and Jay Grossman, I have to say that my life has been all about the blessings and gifts that life.... and my parents have been able to provide for me.... they've given me a wonderful foundation on which to build my life. They've seen to it that no treatment.... no research... no possible road to comfort has eluded me. They raised me in a comfortable home..... one with lots of bathrooms (**Do you feel more comfortable saying powder rooms? Restrooms?.... and wait for the laugh**), and most of all, they really created lemonade.... and opportunity from what could have been a slippery slope to worry, stress, and frustration by channeling their efforts to all of you and your amazing work here at the CCFA. Their tireless participation for this organization has made a tremendous impact where it has been needed and for that I am proud. I am grateful. And I am in awe of just how special they are. (**If you want to make a joke.... if you feel it's right, you can say**) How'd **THAT** sound Dad??? Time for a bonus? (**And wait for the laugh**).

My parents are my heroes.... especially since I heard the expression, "Parenthood... the **scariest** "hood" you'll ever go through." (**Wait for the laugh).** Oh yeah... I gave them a run for their money... as did my brother. With me, my dad, who is generally focused on other more "cerebral" pursuits, must love me a lot... although he lives to be involved and completely focused on his research and work, he was always an amazing father. He coached my underdog baseball team to win the Little League championship.... I bet there was some mathematical algorithm involved... I should ask him about that later....(**Wait for the laugh**). Even when times turned to challenges, Dad was always there... with wisdom, comfort, and guidance to get me through the rough spots. My mom always made sure I was as comfortable and as cared for as I could possibly be... even during flare ups and other illnesses. When I was diagnosed, my mom and dad went into full on "proactive" mode. They found me the best doctors. They got me immediate appointments. They researched options for treatment recommended by those very amazing doctors. My parents never missed any of my medical appointments. They never let me close to feeling despair or defeat. They were vigilant and just provided me with an atmosphere of **possibility** for a better and more resolved future. They created a wonderful life for me, and for that I am so blessed. If you notice, I do my best to avoid the "D" word. To use the word "disease" would be to demean all of the positives in my life, and that just doesn't seem to be an accurate description.

Susan and Jay Grossman are receiving this year's Mission Award for a simple reason. It comes down to one word. One trait that that they share.... between themselves, with both my brother and me, and with their involvement with the CCFA.... **CONSISTENCY**...Consistency of purpose... of dedication... of selfless, caring contribution. My parents set an incredible example for us and for you. They have said that if they could take this disease away from me.... and all of those that live with this, they would.... and you know what? They are!! They have an endless supply of "fight" in them so Crohn's better watch out! I also want to say that thanks to my mother's love and caring and my dad's wisdom and dedication, we have worked in incredible partnership and have gotten even closer and more in tune with each other, and thanks to their limitless support, I am living a healthy, happy and productive life.

Susan and Jay Grossman deserve so many awards, but tonight I am honored to be here to present the Mission Award to this outstanding, generous, resourceful and **DYNAMIC** duo. To offer this expression of gratitude has also presented me with the opportunity to personally thank both my mom and my dad for being the most outstanding parents that anyone might ever wish for. In this day and age it is becoming increasingly challenging to find people with the integrity, soul, conscience and **GUTS** that my parents demonstrate and so willingly share every single day. My parents are my heroes and they have their own unique superpowers, always used for good... my father has an incredible mind, a photographic memory, and integrity that just won't quit. My mom? She is the heart of the family. She's resourceful, interested, and tenacious... she will move mountains to make my life... and that of others... even a little easier and more comfortable. I don't think there's a regimen or food plan or remedy that has eluded her. I have to laugh... some of those suggestions are kind of "out there" but as we're discovering tonight, laughter really is the best medicine as a first line of offense against Crohn's and colitis. (**Do you want to add... up to you**).... that and a few rolls of Charmin **ultra mega**... (**wait for the laugh**).

To Jay and Susan Grossman.... for everything you do.... for the tireless devotion.... the constancy of your love and attention... for never leaving my side.... even if I wanted you to (**Wait for the laugh**)... for inspiring me to wellness and to living my best life... and for all you do to support this vital organization and its fight to conquer these diseases... I present to you the 2017 CCFA Mission Award! Thank you.