

Gabbay's Gala: Fundraising For Long Covid United

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"One day, I thought it was just a cold, and the next thing I knew, I had brain fog for a year," said senior Eli Gabbay, talking about his experience with long COVID.

On June 5, Gabbay partnered with the University of Southern California's Keck School of Medicine and launched Long COVID United, a non-profit organization to raise awareness of his and thousands of others' experiences.

Gabbay, who experienced long COVID for a whole year and missed his junior year, has turned his dreadful experience into an opportunity to help others suffering from long COVID, which according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is "a chronic condition that ... includes a wide range of symptoms or conditions that may improve, worsen, or be ongoing for years."

Gabbay's organization hosted a gala at the USC Hotel on September 19. The gala gathered hundreds of people, and all the proceeds were donated to Keck for "much needed" research for Long COVID, said Dr. Caitlin McAuley, a clinical professor

and lead physician of the Keck COVID Recovery Clinic.

"I was extremely grateful for the immense support we received from all donors at the gala and all the attendees," said Gabbay, noting that Long Covid United (LCU) surpassed its fundraising

were donated with specialized notes supporting the organization.

The gala included a dinner, speeches from doctors, and several anecdotes from long COVID victims.

"It was great to hear stories from other victims and people battling long

"Before learning about Eli's experience, I had no idea what long COVID was and how drastically it could change your life," said senior Maya Greene.

"Gabbay's foundation was truly important because it not only helped raise awareness about Long COVID but also provided and gave us more information about those affected by [long COVID]," said senior George Bejarano. "The foundation plays a key role in progress toward better understanding and treatment of long COVID."

Gabbay ended the night with a heartfelt speech. "I was a 17-year-old kid with no one relying on me, no one I had to provide for. Imagine the single mother with two kids who has to provide for them but can't get out of bed. Or the father with a newborn on the way and had to leave his job for Long Covid. That's why I started Long Covid United and why we are all here today," he said.

The speech touched many in the audience. "[Gabbay's] speech to end the gala was truly a great way to end the night," said Peterson. "You could tell how many people were impacted by [LCU] that night."

COVID," said senior Spencer Peterson, who attended the gala. "It spoke to the importance of the issue [Gabbay] is bringing awareness to."

Several more Buckley students attended LCU's gala and learned about the severity of long COVID.



Photo Courtesy of Josh Mahboubi'26

goals. "The silent auction was a hit and helped us hit our goal."

Items such as a one-of-one Russell Westbrook-signed Denver Nuggets jersey and Martha Stewart cookware