

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Dempsey Center Dedicates Rock Row Healing Garden to Late Board Member Audra Weiss

Portland, ME – October 6, 2025 – In a heartfelt ceremony during the annual Dempsey Challenge weekend, the Dempsey Center unveiled the newly named Rock Row Healing Garden in memory of Audra Weiss, a cherished former board member and advocate who passed away on December 31, 2024 after a courageous battle with cancer. The dedication took place at the organization's Rock Row location in Westbrook, Maine, with Weiss's family, friends, and Dempsey Center leadership in attendance.

Weiss brought her a spirit of fierce advocacy and compassionate support for those affected by cancer to the Dempsey Center Board. Despite her diagnosis, she remained dedicated to helping others navigate their cancer journeys, emphasizing the importance of community support and holistic care. Deb Millard, Audra's best friend, was elected to the Dempsey Center's Board in September of this year, with a goal of carrying on Audra's vision and commitment to the Dempsey Center's work.

Patrick Dempsey, founder of the Dempsey Center, shared his reflections: "Getting to know Audra over the last year of her life was profoundly inspiring. She was a true fighter, and it was an honor to have someone of her caliber join our board and push forward our mission with such heart and resilience."

The Healing Garden at the Dempsey Center is a cornerstone of their biophilic design approach, integrating elements of nature into healing spaces to enhance patient recovery and well-being, a practice first adopted by Dempsey's mother Amanda during her cancer treatment journey. The Rock Row Healing Garden features a variety of vibrant green plants, with a new olive tree added in Weiss's honor. Large windows bathe the space with generous amounts of natural light and comfortable seating allows the room to be used as a tranquil environment for patients and staff to find peace and solace.

The Dempsey Center remains committed to providing comprehensive support to those impacted by cancer, offering a range of services at no cost to help ease the side effects of cancer and its treatment. The Healing Garden is a testament to the Center's dedication to creating spaces that promote healing and comfort for everyone who walks through its doors.

Inspired by the community support of the Dempsey Challenge in Lewiston, Maine, Jim Weiss, Audra's husband, committed an additional \$100,000 beyond the initial \$100,000 Healing Garden gift to directly support the Dempsey Center's annual fundraising effort. The new commitment will support a team of Audra's friends and family who will participate in Dempsey Challenge group athletic events and foster additional fundraising through his greater network.

In honor of his late wife, Jim Weiss added, "Audra turned her personal battle into a beacon of hope for others. Her commitment to advocacy never wavered, even in her final days. She was a pillar of strength and optimism – her legacy will continue to inspire and make a difference."

About The Dempsey Center

The Dempsey Center was founded by actor Patrick Dempsey in 2008 after his mother's experience with cancer and as a way to give back to his hometown community of Lewiston, Maine. Today, the Dempsey Center has grown to two locations in Lewiston and Westbrook, Maine, a hospitality home in Portland, Maine, and has adapted to providing robust support virtually via Dempsey Connects. Our programs provide a wide range of supportive cancer care that address the physical, functional, social, and emotional well-being of people impacted by cancer. All services are provided at no cost to cancer patients, survivors, care partners, family members, and friends. Learn more by visiting www.DempseyCenter.org.

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