

MEDIA ADVISORY

## **Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors to Honor Howard Tellepsen and Kechi Okwuchi at Houston Luncheon**

**300 guests expected at Phoenix RISE – Houston on September 24**

### **WHAT:**

For the first time, Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors will host Phoenix RISE in Houston, gathering 300 burn survivors, families, healthcare professionals, supporters, and Houston community leaders for a luncheon celebrating resilience, recovery, and community after burn injury.

The event will recognize two Houston-connected burn survivors with national awards:

Howard Tellepsen, Chairman of Tellepsen Corporation, will receive Phoenix Society's inaugural Odyssey Award in recognition of his lifetime of leadership, service, and commitment to the burn community.

Kechi Okwuchi, singer, author, speaker, and finalist on *America's Got Talent*, will receive the 2026 Phoenix RISE Champion Award for her resilience, advocacy, and commitment to inspiring and supporting others.

### **WHEN:**

Thursday, September 24, 2026 | 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

### **WHERE:**

Junior League of Houston | 1811 Briar Oaks Lane, Houston, TX 77027

### **WHO:**

- Howard Tellepsen, inaugural Odyssey Award recipient
- Kechi Okwuchi, 2026 Phoenix RISE Champion Award recipient
- Robert Duncan, Founder and Executive Chairman of Transwestern, Master of Ceremonies
- The Rt. Rev. C. Andrew "Andy" Doyle, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas, delivering the invocation
- Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors leadership
- Burn survivors, families, healthcare professionals, supporters, and community leaders

### **WHY:**

Burn recovery does not end when a survivor leaves the hospital. Phoenix RISE – Houston will bring the Houston community together to honor burn survivors, celebrate resilience, and support programs that ensure survivors have access to connection, resources, and care throughout their lives. The event also marks the beginning of Phoenix Society's 50th anniversary celebration, honoring the organization's legacy while looking ahead to the future of burn survivor support.

**MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES:**

- Presentation of the Odyssey Award to Howard Tellepsen
- Presentation of the Phoenix RISE Champion Award to Kechi Okwuchi
- Remarks from both honorees
- Interviews with burn survivors, event participants, and Phoenix Society leadership

**MEDIA RSVP & INTERVIEW REQUESTS:**

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Media are encouraged to RSVP in advance. Interview opportunities can be coordinated before or during the event.