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## Laura Linney Honored at Tower Cancer Research Foundation Gala: ‘Comedy Is a Survival Technique’

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Oscar-nominated actress [Laura Linney](#) received the humanity award for her cancer advocacy work at the Tower Cancer Research Foundation's "Tower of Hope" gala on Thursday evening.

"Growing up, I was always aware that both of my grandfathers died in their late 30s from cancer. So, what I learned early is that cancer takes the people we love. It can run rampant and take them quickly or it can appear and then linger and evade for a long unwanted stay. It leaves loved ones bereft, vulnerable and forever changed," Linney said during her acceptance speech.

Linney said her show "The Big C" resonated with her and the fact that the Showtime series, which followed her character who was diagnosed with terminal cancer, was a comedy made it a worthy challenge.

"I think comedy is a survival technique. It is most cathartic, it touches truth and it tends to make sense of what feels incomprehensible. It's necessary," she continued.

[Jim Burke](#), president of production at Focus Features, presented Linney with the award and thanked her for giving him a "brief sense of peace" when his wife, actress **Christina Simpkins**, was diagnosed with cancer.

Simpkins was another honoree of the night, receiving the hope award. "The saving grace of her getting cancer is that she's allowed herself to reach out to strangers and talk to them and comfort them. She is the perfect recipient for the hope award," Burke said.

The foundation held both a silent and live auction to raise funds to support cancer research, and a dinner for attendees.