

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Andrea Steffy, Gravina, Smith & Matte Marketing and Public Relations, 239-275-5758,
asteffy@gravinasmith.com

IN FOUR HOURS CHARITY WINE FESTIVAL RAISES MORE THAN \$8 MILLION FOR CHILDREN

Photo cutline: His Royal Highness Prince Robert of Luxembourg, one of 30 world-renowned vintners who participated in the Naples Winter Wine Festival, dropped a cash donation into the fund-a-need bucket during the charity auction. This single auction lot raised more than \$600,000 for a new children's behavioral health initiative. The auction's grand total was more than \$8 million raised for underprivileged and at-risk children. Photo credit: Tom Harper

NAPLES, Fla. (Jan. 30, 2010) – Gavel-to-gavel, in only four hours, bidders at The [Naples Winter Wine Festival](#) charity auction raised more than \$8 million for underprivileged and at-risk children. Five hundred patrons were seated under a giant tent set on the grand lawn of The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort in Naples for the live auction, with winning bids ranging from \$22,000 to \$440,000 for 61 one-of-a-kind lots.

Since 2001, the festival has raised \$82.5 million for children in Collier County, Fla. Festival proceeds have expanded the horizons of nearly 100,000 children through grants to children's charities and collaborative funding of major new initiatives, including primary medical and dental care clinics and an early learning center. The festival has been ranked the most successful charity wine auction in the nation for the past six years by Wine Spectator.

"Everyone came through for the kids," said The Honorable Francis Rooney, 2010 festival chair with his wife, Kathleen, trustees of the [Naples Children and Education Foundation](#), the festival's founding organization. "Top chefs and vintners flew in from around the world to make this a very special 10th anniversary festival. Sponsors and patrons dug deep into their wallets to raise money for children who need a helping hand in order to lead healthy, productive lives and fulfill their dreams. We are so appreciative of everyone's support."

Kathleen added, "Children's need for services continues to rise in this difficult economy, and generous festival patrons helped fill that need."

The top money-raising auction lot was a one-week Mediterranean voyage for six couples aboard Dream, a 170-foot Feadship yacht auctioned for \$440,000.

Among the top wine lots were a 2003 Chateau Lynch-Bages presented in rare double magnum and two lots that were auctioned off for \$160,000 each: a 2003-2005 vertical of Colgin Cellars Tychson Hill Cabernet Sauvignon and three large-format Domaine Serene Monogram Pinot Noirs. A bid of \$150,000 won four mammoth nine-liter bottles of Chateau Haut-Brion donated by Prince Robert of Luxembourg.

Lifestyle lots that drew high bids included a mystery golf tour for seven through America's Northeast, which was auctioned for \$360,000. A winning bid of \$340,000 entitles two couples to a 10-day South African odyssey through the country's premier wine regions and landscapes. A fantasy trip, which included eight days for two couples on a life-changing excursion to Thailand, was auctioned off for \$240,000.

For the first time in the festival's history, guests made on-the-spot donations for a special lot called a fund-a-need, which raised money for NCEF's newest initiative – the children's behavioral health collaborative for low income and at-risk children. The lot raised more than \$600,000.

Festival events spanned three days and included a tour of children's charities to enable patrons to experience firsthand how festival proceeds benefit children in need. Intimate vintner dinners prepared by the nation's top chefs were held at NCEF trustees' homes, with wines personally poured by

internationally acclaimed vintners. Saturday's auction was cause for celebration at a wine-down party, and a Sunday brunch brought festivities to a close.

An NCEF check presentation and community celebration will be held April 18 to distribute funds raised at the 2010 festival. The 2011 festival will be held Jan. 28 – 30. For more information about the Naples Winter Wine Festival, go to www.napleswinefestival.com.