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UPDATE: Naples Winter Wine Festival Live Auction Raises \$12.32 Million for Kids in Need

***Fund-A-Need Donations Generate \$1 Million;
Online Auction Raises an Additional \$231,000***

Naples, FL – January 26, 2015 – With all the donations counted, the Naples Winter Wine Festival’s live auction surpassed \$12.3 million, bringing the total dollars raised since the Festival’s inception in 2001 to over \$135 million in support of initiatives to help children in need in Collier County.

This year’s Fund-A-Need, which supports “Now You See It,” NCEF’s initiative to address pediatric vision challenges among at-risk youth, brought in a whopping \$1 million. These generous donations will pay for vision screenings and eyeglasses for kids all around the community.

The first-ever online auction, which opened on Monday, January 12, and closed at 8:00pm on Saturday, January 24, brought an additional \$231,000 in donations.

“It was thrilling to see how many people in the community got in on the excitement and bid in our inaugural online auction” said Chuck Hallberg, Co-Chair of the 2015 Festival and Chair of the Auction Committee. “It was a great way to get the entire community involved and we couldn’t be happier with the generosity of those who participated.”

The online auction’s top bid of \$32,000 went to the celebrity chef lot, an amazing opportunity to relish in some of the countries most distinguished cuisine from the chefs who traveled to Naples for the Festival. This lot included dinner at BARTOLOTTA, Ristorante di Mare in Las Vegas and 4 premium tickets to Le Rêve – The Dream; dinner with wine pairings for four people at Grace, Chicago’s second restaurant to be awarded the coveted three Michelin stars; dinner for 6 people at acclaimed Chef Tom Colicchio’s newest restaurant, Beachcraft in South Beach; and much more.

Additional online auction highlights included:

- A bronze Sculpture by famed artist Bob Wilfong exploring the consciousness of man and his relationship to his surroundings went for **\$12,000**.
- A tasting and lunch at Gargiulo Vineyards raised **\$11,500**.
- **\$8,000** was the bid for a long weekend in Napa Valley, a 3 liter bottle of 2006 Dalla Valle Vineyards Maya and a 9 liter bottle of 2000 Dalla Valle Vineyards Maya.
- An exclusive wine dinner for 20 people at Avenue 5 in Naples fetched **\$7,500**.

This adds to the top bids from this weekend’s live auction, which included a \$500,000 winning bid for the ultimate “Krug Experience,” complete with a collection of Krug’s most notable bottles and a private, multi-day visit to the champagne house’s French estate.

Notable live auction winners also included:

- A **\$450,000** bid for the 2015 Huracán LP 610-4 and **\$420,000** bid for the 2015 Mercedes SLS AMG GT Final Edition.
- **\$440,000** for a 23-day around the world trip for two on a luxury jet with travel to Korea, Chia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Oman, Kenya and the Canary Islands.
- A private tour of the Battle of Gettysburg with legendary filmmaker Ken Burns raised **\$340,000**.
- Tickets to the Golden Globes and an invitation to Harvey Weinstein's private after party went for a whopping **\$330,000**.

The weekend began with a historic tasting seminar and luncheon featuring older vintages of the greatest Krug champagnes, moderated by Olivier Krug himself. Krug was joined by special guest and Master Sommelier Larry Stone, who provided attendees with fascinating insight into Krug and the Champagne region.

The accomplished vintners who attended the Festival came from the 15 global wine-producing regions, five countries, and two continents, and included Honored Vintner Marchese Piero Antinori, one of the most prestigious names in Italian winemaking. These celebrated vintners were joined by over a dozen Master Sommeliers, a distinction that only 219 wine professionals worldwide have earned. Renowned Master Sommelier Larry Stone returned to the Festival for his third year, this time as Honored Sommelier.

Festival attendees enjoyed meals prepared by the best culinary talent from across the United States, including celebrity chefs Tom Colicchio, Paul Bartolotta, and Curtis Duffy, who just earned a coveted three Michelin stars for his Chicago restaurant, Grace.

Using the funds raised from this year's auction, NCEF will award grants to local organizations serving Collier County children in need on March 9.

About the Naples Winter Wine Festival

The Naples Winter Wine Festival is one of the world's most prestigious charity wine auctions, bringing together renowned vintners and chefs with wine enthusiasts and philanthropists for a three-day festival that raises millions of dollars for underprivileged and at-risk children. Every dollar raised under the tent funds the festival's founding organization, the Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF), whose annual grants and strategic initiatives have provided around 200,000 children with the services and resources they need to excel. For more information, please visit Napleswinefestival.com.

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