

Chicago Tribune

Face the Future Foundation Gala Brings Smiles to Chicago Kids

By Candace Jordan



Paddle Raise by David Goodman of Auction Results

Face the Future Foundation hosted a Venetian Masquerade Gala that attracted approximately 425 guests, many wearing playful masks, to the Four Seasons Hotel Chicago on March 14. Benefiting the Craniofacial Center at University of Illinois College of Medicine, the event raised more than \$500,000 to provide support for children suffering from cleft palate and other craniofacial abnormalities.

Emcee LeeAnn Trotter (NBC-5 Chicago) welcomed guests and spoke about the impact of the Center that "serves more economically disadvantaged kids than any other teaching hospital in Illinois." She asked the gala committee, led by chair Renee Betzelos, to stand and be recognized. "It's a privilege to help raise funds for the Craniofacial Center as they truly change children's lives and perform small miracles constantly," Betzelos said.

Chef Art Smith and Jesus Salgueiro served as honorary co-chairs. They praised the Center's work and spoke about their own support for kids through Common Threads, a nonprofit healthy eating initiative they founded in 2003. "Any time an opportunity is given to us to help children, we should take it," Smith said.

Honorees Mary Ann Rose and Heinz Kern received a standing ovation when Foundation President Mike Judge presented them with the President's Award for their "extraordinary service and support of the Foundation." The couple expressed their gratitude and Rose remarked, "This shows how much Chicagoans care for children. They have taken on a challenge that Illinois government is reluctant to address and will never let a child down."

A **live auction** was conducted by **David Goodman** of **Auction Results** with packages that offered an apartment in Paris for a week, a luxury Mediterranean cruise aboard the Seabourn Odyssey, a chateau in France's Burgundy region, plus trips to Hawaii, Argentina and Costa Rica. **The auction raised more than \$125,000 with a paddle raise bringing in an extra \$120,000!**

The Craniofacial Center at the [UIC](#) College of Medicine is one of the oldest and largest facilities of its kind in the country, treating more than 5,000 Chicago area kids annually regardless of their ability to pay.

Freelance writer Candace Jordan is involved with many local organizations, including some whose events she covers.