

2023

SEATTLE CELEBRITY

WAITERS LUNCHEON



Friday, May 12, 2023

Fairmont Olympic Hotel

Spanish Ballroom



Beneficiary:



SEATTLE POLICE FOUNDATION
Partnership for a Safe Seattle

The 39th Celebrity Waiters Luncheon embraces founder sentiment...

“Let’s have fun and let’s do good” - CWL Founder Gene Juarez



Held at Seattle’s glamorous, iconic Fairmont Olympic Hotel

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly what it is that makes the Celebrity Waiters Luncheon so special.

Surely, each of its unique facets play an important role: the costumes, the extravagant décor, the spirited competition of the live auction, the gourmet, chef-prepared menu, the fine wine selection, the dazzling auction items... All of which amalgamate to create an unparalleled aura of goodwill.

But more than anything else, the biggest contributor to the event’s magic is the collective energy sparked by a room filled with people from all different walks of life, unified by a deep passion for a common cause.

Whatever your favorite element, no one can deny the magnetism that was present in the ballroom of Seattle’s luxurious Fairmont Olympic Hotel on Friday, May 12, 2023, as the Celebrity Waiters Luncheon celebrated its 39th year of philanthropy. The recipient of its advocacy was the Seattle Police Foundation (SPF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that raises support and awareness for the Seattle Police Department.

This was the Seattle Police Foundation’s second year as the CWL beneficiary.

CWL Mission

The Celebrity Waiters Luncheon Organization serves the Puget Sound area by raising funds annually for a local charitable organization in the areas of Education, Health, Human Services and Children/Youth.



Every year, Celebrity Waiters and their guests don garb ranging from outlandish to subtle...

...all centered around a singular theme. This year's event, called "Lunch at the Museum," was a play on words derived from the 2006 blockbuster film "Night at the Museum."

Each Celebrity Waiter adopted their own unique table theme based on the film.

Table themes included things like Easter Island, George Washington, the Old West, a Wine Safari, Field Trip, Security Guards, Ancient Egypt, Movie Night, and Ancient Sicily.



The 39th Annual CWL event
raised over \$588,000
for the Seattle Police Foundation!



Waiters embraced the versatile “Lunch at the Museum” motif



As a result of this year's theme...

The room was filled with security guards, ancient Romans, schoolkids, jungle animals, adventurers, world explorers, United States Presidents, Egyptian pharaohs, and much more.

From the snarling tyrannosaurus rex that guarded the ballroom entrance, to the lush green jungle vines draped between the tables, it was hard not to get caught up in the excitement.

Seattle Police Foundation President and CEO Cherie Skager helped kick off the Luncheon by providing a few details about the Seattle Police Foundation. “We are 100 percent supported by the community and we are so grateful to be the beneficiary of this event, again, for the second year in a row,” Skager said.

She highlighted a few of the ways SPF utilized last year's CWL funding to help the Seattle community, including the Beds for Kids project, which in 2022 provided 300 beds to children who had previously been sleeping on the floor.

Other investments in public safety included overall support for Officer Wellness, an intensive 2-day class for all SPD K9 handlers to practice K9 first aid and trauma care, a virtual reality training platform created by technology leader Axon, and much more.



CWL 2023 Chair: SPF Board Member Mark Pinkowski

Up next was one of this year's CWL Chair, Mark Pinkowski, a commercial banking expert and Seattle University Albers School Mentor who serves on SPF's Board of Directors. Pinkowski paused to praise the law enforcement professionals of SPD.

"These are the men and women who run towards danger when everybody else is running away," he said. "These are the individuals that meet us and take care of us in our most vulnerable moments, and these are the individuals that when they leave home, their family doesn't know that they're coming home that evening."

He then reminded everyone of the famous words uttered by iconic CWL founder Gene Juarez that became the foundation of the Luncheon at its genesis 39 years ago:

"Let's have fun and let's do good" - Gene Juarez



A note from Mark Pinkowski



Hear from this year's CWL Chair

“Let’s have fun and let’s do good!”

If I had to sum up this year’s Celebrity Waiters Luncheon in a short phrase, I’d return to the timeless words spoken by CWL’s Gene Juarez when he launched the iconic charity luncheon 39 years ago. “Let’s have fun and let’s do good!”

This year, I believe we did Gene proud!

As the 2023 CWL Chair and member of the Seattle Police Foundation Board of Directors, I’ve never been more invested in the success of the event, and we didn’t disappoint. The love and appreciation in the room for all things public safety was extraordinary and couldn’t have come at a better time as we work to rebuild our city in the aftermath of the last three years.

The quirky décor of this year’s “Lunch at the Museum” motif was an unexpected hit, as Waiters decked their tables out in accordance with the blockbuster Ben Stiller movie, “Night at the Museum.” Themes included Archeologists, The Old West, Security Guards, Field Trip, Safari Animals, and more, plus what was probably the most elaborate of the bunch, the George Washington table, complete with its own cherry tree generously festooned with beautiful pink blossoms.

Like last year, Seattle Police Department ABS Explosive Detection K9 Jazzy-Juno was on hand to charm the masses. K9 Jazzy is a true hometown hero, well known for her work to keep Climate Pledge Arena and other large venues safe for the guests who flock to Seattle for athletic events, concerts, and other performances. I want to thank our partners at PNC Bank, for generously providing the photo booth which allowed guests to take home a memento of their time spent with the sweet, amiable pup.

One of the high points of the day came during the raise the paddle portion of the event, which raised roughly \$311,00 for SPD’s lifesaving EMT Unit. Hearing SPD EMS Coordinator Tyler Verhaar talk about the Unit was incredibly inspiring, and then keynote speaker Zach Laster-Hazard stole the show. Zach, a nearly lifelong Seattle resident and business owner, pulled no punches as he spoke of his experiences as one of the EMT Unit’s “satisfied customers.”



Note from Mark continued....



I have the privilege of working with Zach on the Seattle Police Foundation Board of Directors and I can tell you, listening to Zach's powerful story never gets old. He is an amazing testament to the lives being saved by the EMT Unit in every area of our city. He sets a standard of excellence in everything he does, whether it's work or taking time for world travel and exciting adventures.

Zach's penchant for serving his community while pursuing every adventure is in perfect alignment with CWL's underlying mission, to have fun and do good. What a great match!

Another high point was seeing Seattle Kraken President Tod Leiweke honored with the 2023 Community Service Award. Leiweke is a bold visionary and a champion for the Seattle community. His words inspired the entire room and convinced us all that our best days are in front of us. Seattle is lucky to have him!



Overall, this year's event brought in over \$588,000 to support the men and women of the Seattle Police Department through the careful and deliberate work of the Seattle Police Foundation. I couldn't have asked for a better outcome than that.

Most of all, I want to say thank you to each of you and your amazing guests who attended this year's Celebrity Waiters Luncheon. Your passion is what makes this event great! You were devoted to the mission, had unrivaled amounts of fun, and, most importantly of all, you gave generously and from your hearts. Without you and your commitment to this event, to our city, and to the health of our community, none of this is possible.

I am very grateful.

Sincerely,
Mark Pinkowski
2023 CWL Event Chair



2023 Community Service Award

“Our best days are in front of us...” – Tod Leiweke

Seattle Kraken President Tod Leiweke received the 2023 Community Service Award, in honor of his support and advocacy of the Seattle community.

Leiweke took to the stage to talk not only about his support of the Seattle Police Department, but also what it was like to breathe life into a brand-new National Hockey League (NHL) team right smack in the middle of a global pandemic.

While his comments crescendoed on the beautifully optimistic catchphrase that, “our best days are in front of us,” Leiweke was painfully honest about his early impression of the Seattle Center.

“The first time I walked through it, it was not a very appealing site,” Leiweke said. “But through the great work of the police department and others, Seattle Center is now clean and safe, and its best days are in front of us.”

Truly, on any given day the Seattle Center bustles with energy, as Seattleites and guests flock to Climate Pledge Arena for world class concerts, beautifully diverse cultural celebrations, and top-tier athletic events. During hockey season you’re greeted by a jubilant crowd of ardent Kraken enthusiasts, proudly decked out in duds decorated with that distinctive Seattle Kraken S. It is no secret that Leiweke’s investment in Seattle has bred some of the most passionate hockey fans you’ll ever encounter.



Fairmont
OLYMPIC HOTEL

It was a leap of faith, Leiweke explained, calling it one of the biggest bets ever made in the Seattle community.

“We made a bet that this community would someday fall in love with hockey, and the love affair is official between the Kraken and Seattle,” Leiweke said. “Our players are proud to represent this city. I have always been proud to represent Seattle, and I’m one person that believes our best days are in front of us, because of people like you coming together and having a great day.”

Leiweke received a standing ovation for his inspiring words, as CWL board members presented him with a custom, one-of-a-kind glass sculpture fashioned to resemble the Space Needle, handcrafted by the esteemed glass artists of Seattle’s Glass Eye Studio.



2023 Raise the Paddle

Brought in over \$311,000 for the lifesaving EMT!

The raise the paddle portion of the event was devoted to the Seattle Police Department's EMT Unit. SPD is one of the few police departments in the nation with a dedicated program for EMT trained officers and was one of the first to deploy these multidisciplinary law enforcement professionals. The EMT Unit is not funded by the City of Seattle, and instead, relies solely on the Seattle Police Foundation for its funding.

Prior to SPD's commitment to funding this lifesaving Unit, Seattle's EMT-certified officers paid for their training and medical equipment out of their own pockets.

The program is headed up by Seattle Police Officer and EMS Coordinator Tyler Verhaar, who said a few words about the Unit before introducing the Celebrity Waiters Luncheon guest speaker, Seattle community member and successful businessman, Zach Laster-Hazard.

"The Seattle Police Department EMT unit is a breed of extraordinary individuals," Verhaar said. "These men and women volunteer to go into harm's way and render aid to those who need them, regardless of who they are or what circumstance brought them there."

What many people might not know is that in violent incidents, like shootings or stabbings, first responders from the Seattle Fire Department cannot respond until the police deem the scene safe. This means that during active incidents of violence, Seattle police officers are the only thing standing between the life and death of injured victims. The goal of the EMT Unit is to bridge gaps, extend the continuum of care, and save as many lives as possible.

The Unit has saved many lives in Seattle and will save many more.

"It's a rare opportunity in government, and a rare opportunity in police work, where we get to see the success of a Unit in people's names," Tyler said.

Even more rare, he added, is the opportunity to become close friends with one of the EMT Unit's satisfied customers. With that, he introduced guest speaker Laster-Hazard.

In October of 2018, Zach was walking across a Seattle parking lot when he was gunned down by an unknown person in a passing black Lincoln town car. Shot in the abdomen, Zach intuitively recognized the severity of his injuries and used one of his hands to try and staunch the bleeding. Fully convinced that he was about to die, he used his other hand to call his mother to tell her goodbye.

"Shortly thereafter, two of my saviors arrived in the form of Officers Sean Ross and Ryan Nichols from the Seattle Police department. Both looked younger than me," Zach said. "They immediately started triaging, treating my wound, working to stabilize me and get a sense of my awareness."

Zach recalls looking over and seeing the firefighters and EMTs parked at the corner, as Ross and Nichols worked to keep him alive. Once the scene was safe, the firefighters and medics approached, loaded him onto the ambulance, and raced to Harborview. Zach made an astounding recovery and once he was discharged from the hospital, he immediately went to work to make a positive difference.

When he learned that the EMT Unit was not funded by tax dollars, he was astonished.

“The emergency blanket used on me was from Nichol’s time in the Army,” Zach said. “And the gauze they packed my wound with was purchased with funds donated by the Seattle Police Foundation.”

Zach became a member of SPF Board of Directors and has not looked back. He described getting shot as “one of the most positive events of my life,” and encouraged CWL guests to give big, and do what they could to help support the lifesaving EMT Unit.

Zach ended his time on the stage by asking everyone in the audience to express their gratitude to the men and women in law enforcement.

“The next time you see a police officer go up to them and say thanks,” Zach said. “We have no idea what they go through and risk for us every day.”

Thanks to Zach’s compelling testimony, along with Verhaar’s passionate overview of the Unit, CWL guests donated a total of \$311,000 to the EMT Unit.



Top Selling Auction Item

The White Party, courtesy of Ian and Laura MacNeil (shown in photo below), sold for a price tag of \$14,000... TWICE!

Congratulations to winning bidders Sam Baker & Christina Seafort



Winning bidders get a stylish evening party on the lawn at Celebrity Waiters Ian and Laura MacNeil's lakeside home on Hunts Point.

The evening begins with a cocktail cruise departing from Hunts Point featuring Glass Vodka cocktails and wines from The Winemaker's reserve served aboard "Vesper," Matthew and Zoie Loso's beautiful 65'V68 Princess yacht.

After that, they'll return to the MacNeil's for an elegant alfresco dining experience on the lawn featuring hand selected cuts of Wagyu beef acquired personally directly from 2C Cattle Ranch in Whitesboro, Texas.

The chef for the evening is none other than the esteemed Chef Edison Mays, the new Executive Chef of famed El Gaucho Bellevue. Chef Mays has more than 20 years of cooking in diverse international culinary locations including Europe, Caribbean, Canada, Vietnam, & the United States. Chef Mays plans to indulge guests with a truly unique culinary experience using his endless study of the fundamental nature of food knowledge, ingredients, and how those connect to one's life.

This culinary experience includes paired wines from the MacNeil's cellar and of course, a few surprise cocktails. Guests are requested to wear all white - head to toe! This experience takes place weather permitting on Thursday August 24, 2023.



Other Top Sellers

An Evening with Chef Mauro and
Cayuse Wines at the home of Paul and
Susan Archer went for \$7,500

3-liter bottle of Napa Valley Reserve
went for \$6,500 twice



CWL Waiter Awards 2023

Tops in Tips: Bobbie Allen & Jennifer Harnish


Best Decor: Khue Dang & Jennifer Wen

The Silver Spoon Award: tied between Sam Baker
& Beth Nagy / Gary McLean & Marie Durflinger

The Fairmont Award: Bob & Christy Hentges

Leader of the Pack: Laura Larson (Top pre event
tips)





Thank you for 10 years

David Silverman's last hurrah

Auctioneer David Silverman has become one of the most sought-after charity auctioneers in the Seattle area.

His ability to entertain a crowd while compelling people to give generously in the name of a great cause is legendary.

But after 10 years at the auctioneer's helm on behalf of the Celebrity Waiters Luncheon, David is laying down the microphone.

The Celebrity Waiters Luncheon Board of Directors is sad to let him go, but all is well because they've got Fred Northup poised to run the show next year.

David and Fred shared the stage at this year's event, helping to raise over \$588,000 for the Seattle Police Foundation.



**Thank you
David!**



Caught by Paparazzi



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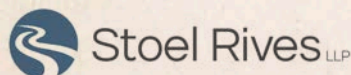
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