



MEDIA CONTACT:

Krista Zilizi Logue
kristazilizi@hotmail.com
407-620-5799

ORLANDO'S TASTE OF THE NATION FOR NO KID HUNGRY ELEVATES CHILDHOOD HUNGER RELIEF BY RAISING \$279,487 DURING ITS 27TH EVENT

ORLANDO, FLA. (September 9, 2016) - Orlando's Taste of the Nation® for No Kid Hungry celebrated its 27th year by raising \$279,487 to help ensure children struggling with hunger in our city and across America are connected to the meals they need this coming year.

Forty-four of the area's most distinguished chefs along with nearly two dozen craft brewers, wine purveyors and spirit vendors came together at the Orlando World Center Marriott on Aug. 27 to serve sips and samples to a record attendance of more than 3,000 guests.

This annual celebration of the community's culinary excellence supports the childhood feeding programs of Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida, Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida, statewide organization Florida Impact, and national beneficiary Share Our Strength.

Guests enjoyed live music provided by DJ Jeff Townsend and an exciting silent auction featuring signed memorabilia, stays at upscale hotels, dining experiences, rounds of golf on area courses, and exotic adventures and getaways.

The event's popular Instant Wine Cellar game awarded more than 150 bottles of wine valued at more than \$2,500 to the person who purchased the winning key that opened the locked wine door.

The Giving Tree, sponsored by *Edible Orlando*, returned for the second year rewarding 100 lucky participants with a taste of Orlando's most popular dining and drinking establishments. For a \$50 donation, each participant walked away with a gift certificate ranging from \$25 to \$300 in value.

The all-new Ring Toss for Wine fundraiser was met with enthusiasm by hundreds of guests who tried their luck at winning fine bottles of wine by landing rings around the neck of a wine bottle. Rings were available for \$5 for two tosses or \$15 for five tosses.

A flash mob — involving 50 people dancing in sync around the center of the ballroom following the evening's opening announcements — made a flashy impression on guests and brought some special energy to this year's event.



ORLANDO'S TASTE OF THE NATION

FOR NO KID HUNGRY

For the first time, Orlando's Taste of the Nation introduced the Golden Ticket Giveaway, offering an exciting way to win a pair of complimentary Taste of the Nation tickets. Guests who dined at 23 participating establishments during the month of August had a 1 in 10 chance of winning two free tickets just by asking their server for a Golden Ticket. The contest encouraged guests to patronize participating Taste of the Nation restaurants and beverage venues while generating social media awareness for this year's event. Seven guests discovered a Golden Ticket while dining at these locations during the 22-day contest.

One of the region's longest-running food and beverage fundraising events, Orlando's Taste of the Nation is a volunteer-driven event organized each year by an all-volunteer steering committee representing a variety of local businesses and organizations, supported by more than 300 day-of event volunteers, and made possible by the in-kind support of a variety of local business partners.

"Our volunteer model allows us to direct almost every dollar of funds raised to our beneficiaries and generates profound awareness and relief for the children of Central Florida who face hunger on a daily basis," said Michele Byington, co-chair for Orlando's Taste of the Nation event. "This simply would not be possible without all the volunteer support we receive for planning, coordination, logistics and donation solicitation."

The funds raised by Orlando's Taste of the Nation will help Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida provide shelter and services to more than 150 children and their families each night and serve more than 250,000 nutritious meals in the coming year.

"For nearly three decades, this incredible event has directly supported the childhood nutrition program at the Coalition," said Brent Trotter, President/CEO of Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida. "Because of the passionate committee, sponsors, chefs, donors and attendees who've made it their mission to end childhood hunger, more than 150 kids at the Coalition start each day with a wholesome breakfast and end each day with a nutritious dinner without worrying about where their next meal will come from."

Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida will direct the funds raised from the event to childhood hunger relief programs at their agency to assist the 1 in 3 kids in Orlando who will struggle with hunger this coming year.

"Taste of the Nation funds make it possible for our organization to continue to close the gap on childhood hunger in Central Florida, which unfortunately remains far too wide at this time," said Dave Krepcho, President & CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida. "We're so pleased to be able to multiply this support into more food, for more kids, than at any other time in our history."

ORLANDO'S TASTE OF THE NATION

FOR NO KID HUNGRY

Orlando's Taste of the Nation was presented nationally by Citi and Sysco and sponsored by OpenTable, San Pell/Acqua Panna and media sponsor Food Network. Special thanks to local sponsors Darden Restaurants, Regions Bank, Harris Rosen Foundation, Spotlight, Noble Marketing, Disney, FreshPoint, Hilton Grand Vacations, Bright House, Darden Federal Credit Union, Ernst & Young, Patriot National, Rosen Hotels & Resorts, Universal Orlando Resort, Quality 1 and Amerifactors. For our complete list of sponsors, please visit NoKidHungry.org/Orlando.

We also recognize the generous support of Orlando World Center Marriott who has donated the event space for the last seven years, Progressive Communications who has donated their printing services for the last 15 years, Day Entertainment & Events, Accent Entertainment Photo Booth, Airstar Space Lighting, Peyton Entertainment, Gifn Photo Booth, Clear Channel Outdoor, CBS Radio/MIX 105.1 and 1059 SUNNY FM, and WFTV 9 Family Connection.

Special thanks to Eola Wine Company, Blue Martini Pointe Orlando, The Ancient Olive and The Spice & Tea Exchange for their fundraising efforts leading up to our main event. Each served up tasty starter events to whet the community's appetite for Orlando's Taste of the Nation while raising funds for national beneficiary Share Our Strength and local beneficiaries Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida and Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida.

ABOUT ORLANDO'S TASTE OF THE NATION® FOR NO KID HUNGRY

Orlando's Taste of the Nation® for No Kid Hungry brings together the area's top chefs who donate their time, talent and passion to end childhood hunger in Central Florida. Along with culinary delights, guests have the opportunity to sample select wines, cocktails and premium beers and enjoy silent and live auctions and entertainment. Every dollar raised fights hunger and homelessness in the Central Florida. Local beneficiaries include Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida and Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida.

For more information:

Website: NoKidHungry.org/Orlando

Facebook: www.facebook.com/OrlandoTaste

Twitter: @OrlandoTaste

Instagram: #OrlTaste

ABOUT SHARE OUR STRENGTH

Share Our Strength®, a national nonprofit, is ending childhood hunger in America by connecting children with the nutritious food they need to lead healthy, active lives. Through its No Kid Hungry® campaign—a national effort to end childhood hunger in America—Share Our Strength ensures children in need are enrolled in effective federal nutrition programs; invests in community organizations fighting hunger; teaches families how to cook healthy, affordable meals; and builds public-private partnerships to end childhood hunger, at the state and city level. Working closely with the culinary industry and relying on the strength of its volunteers, Share Our Strength hosts innovative culinary fundraising events and develops pioneering cause marketing campaigns that support No Kid Hungry. For more information, visit <http://www.nokidhungry.org>.

For more information on our event and Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry® Campaign, please visit NoKidHungry.org/Orlando

FOLLOW US!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/OrlandoTaste • Twitter: @OrlandoTaste • Instagram #OrlTaste

