



SANTA BARBARA VINTNERS



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Santa Barbara Vintners Raise \$1 Million for Direct Relief in Record-Setting Auction

Funds will support safe birth initiatives for moms and babies around the world

SANTA BARBARA, Calif., Feb. 24, 2014 – In its most successful wine auction ever, the Santa Barbara Vintners Foundation (SBVF) hit its ambitious \$1 million dollar goal to support the work of medical aid organization Direct Relief at the eighth biennial Santa Barbara Wine Auction held Saturday evening at the **Bacara Resort & Spa**.

Celebrities **Jane Lynch**, **Emelio Estevez**, and **Shiri Appleby** were among the more than 600 guests who attended the exclusive event emceed by **Chris Harrison**, host of ABC's hit reality show "*The Bachelor*." With a 1930s theme of "Hollywood and Wine," the black-tie gala featured an exquisite four course dinner crafted by James Beard nominated guest chef **Jon Shook** together with Bacara staff. The food was complimented with private reserve wine tastings from more than 40 of Santa Barbara County's most celebrated vintners.

The live and silent auctions included once-in-a-lifetime experiences, including rare library wines, an opportunity to attend the ten-year reunion of the Oscar-winning film *Sideways*, and even a private lunch with Direct Relief's remarkable 106-year-old volunteer, **Edythe Kirchmaier**. Additionally, the SBVF recognized **Rick and Diana Longoria of Longoria Wines** as Pioneer Vintners as well as **Barbara Banke of Jackson Family Wines** as a Distinguished Vintner in a brief award ceremony.

Attendees gave more than \$250,000 in the *Stand Up and Be Counted* portion of the event, in which guests raised their paddles to join Direct Relief in reducing preventable maternal and infant death. Nearly 300,000 women die from childbirth-related complications each year -- 99 percent of such tragedies in developing countries. The funding will enable Direct Relief to continue equipping midwives to attend and provide clean, safe births, one of the most critical interventions to reduce maternal and newborn mortality.

As the Santa Barbara Vintners charitable "arm," the SBVF has gifted more than \$3 million toward Direct Relief's efforts since 2000. Among other things, SBVF funding helped launch Direct Relief USA, now the largest charitable medicines program in the United States operating in all 50 States, and a childhood pneumonia initiative that has cut death rates dramatically in rural Liberia.

To help get guests home safely, Direct Relief partnered with **Uber**, a mobile app that allows the user to request a ride and connect with a driver for immediate transportation.

About Direct Relief

Direct Relief is a leading medical relief organization, active in all 50 states and in 70 countries. It works with more than 1,000 health clinics across the U.S. to assist in emergencies and on an ongoing basis, providing them with free medications for people in need. The organization has been among the world's largest medical suppliers in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake, has top charity ratings, including four-star and "top-notch" rating from Charity Navigator, and a 100% fundraising efficiency rating from Forbes magazine. For more information visit www.DirectRelief.org.

About the Santa Barbara Vintners Foundation

The Santa Barbara Vintners Foundation is the charitable umbrella under which the Santa Barbara Vintners conducts its philanthropic work. Through the Santa Barbara Vintners Foundation, the Association contributes to the community through local charitable, art and educational and scholarship organizations with proceeds from its various events.

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