



AbilityFirst Festival of Fall Draws 400 Guests; Raises More Than \$160,000 Event Supports Programs Serving Children and Adults with Disabilities

South Pasadena, CA – October 4, 2015 – The threat of rain didn’t stop more than 400 supporters from raising more than \$160,000 at the AbilityFirst 41st annual Gourmet Festival of Fall presented by Union Bank event which was held at the South Pasadena home of **Mary and Bill Urquhart**. The event was hosted by NBC4 Southern California’s award-winning journalist **Whit Johnson**.

Funds raised benefit AbilityFirst programs in Pasadena and surrounding areas, including the Lawrence L. Frank Center and the Pasadena Work Center, which for nearly 50 years have provided individuals with physical and developmental disabilities – including autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy and Down syndrome – services to help them reach their full potential. These include after-school, adult day, social recreation and community aquatic programs, as well as employment for adults with disabilities.

“AbilityFirst could not provide the life-changing programs we do without the generosity of our donors, partner restaurants and beverage providers, as well as the numerous businesses that donated services and auction items,” said AbilityFirst CEO Lori Gangemi. “We are also incredibly grateful to Union Bank and Mary & Bill Urquhart for their many years of involvement and support.”

The AbilityFirst Festival of Fall is an annual event where philanthropy and networking go hand-in-hand while guests sample exquisite gourmet cuisine and signature dishes prepared by prominent area restaurants. Top California vintners, brewers and spirit providers poured their best selections to pair with the tastings. AbilityFirst made a special presentation to the Frank Family for their 90 years of dedication and service to the organization and people with disabilities. **L.A. County Supervisor Michael Antonovich** presented the organization with a proclamation and **Assemblymember Chris Holden** gave opening remarks. Actor and AbilityFirst Honorary Chair **Jane Kaczmarek** was in attendance. This extraordinary evening also featured live and silent auctions featuring one-of-a-kind experiences such as a helicopter ride-along with the Pasadena Police Department and gift packages including VIP Rose Parade tickets, live event tickets, private wine tastings, and gift certificates to restaurants, museums and business services. Greg Wood was the Festival of Fall event chair.

For more information and to participate in next year’s event, go to the [Festival of Fall](#) website.

**Media Contact Information: Sheri A. Lunn, Sr. Director of Communications & Marketing – AbilityFirst
(626) 639-1745 – slunn@abilityfirst.org**

About AbilityFirst

[AbilityFirst](#) provides programs and services to help children and adults with disabilities reach their full potential. Founded in 1926 as the Crippled Children’s Society of Southern California, AbilityFirst offers a broad range of employment, recreational, and socialization programs as well as a fully-accessible camp, Camp Paivika, for both children and adults. AbilityFirst Professional Business Services meets many key corporate needs in the Los Angeles area such as packaging and fulfillment, secure document shredding and light industrial staffing, all while providing our participants the pride of employment and income.

About MUFG Union Bank

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