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For Immediate Release



Forty Carrots Raises Half Million Dollars for Parenting Program

December 20, 2016 - One of Sarasota's most notable charity events – **Wine, Women & Shoes** – recently raised over a half million dollars. This three-day fundraising success had philanthropic women and supporting men joining together to sip, shop and dine for a common cause: **The Parenting Program of Forty Carrots Family Center**. The dollars raised will provide critical parenting education and mental health services throughout Sarasota and Manatee County to families that might otherwise not have access.

“We are humbled by the generosity of sponsors, retailers, vintners, dinner hosts, guests and volunteers who made this stunning success possible,” said Michelle Kapreilian, executive director. “This is an incredibly fun event, but the services that it makes possible are extremely serious and vitally important to families in our community. We are thrilled to be able to continue serving families in need regardless of their ability to pay.”

The 12th annual Wine, Women & Shoes, presented by Venus Med Spa, was comprised of a series of events over three days. The sold-out Signature Luncheon, on Friday, November 18th, hosted 585 women with the help of fifty-seven “Solemen” – professionals from the community who volunteer their day as hosts. The Luncheon featured a runway fashion with international designer Zang Toi produced by Saks Fifth Avenue, tastings from 13 wineries, and retail vendors from as far away as Dubai. The event series kicked off with a VIP reception at Michael's Wine Cellar on Thursday, November 17th and concluded with four wine dinners on Saturday, November 19th hosted by James and Lea Buchanan with Roberto and Denise Mei; Ian and Melissa Howard; Mark and Kim Standish; and Robert & Emily Stroud.

Forty Carrots Family Center strives to provide children with a Good Beginning That Lasts a Lifetime through its Parenting Program, Mental Health Services, and Preschool.

Wine, Women & Shoes exclusively benefits its Parenting Program which provides more than 1,000 free parenting education and mental health classes throughout in Sarasota and Manatee counties annually, serving over 3,900 clients at 27 locations. Rated 4-Stars by Charity Navigator, Forty Carrots fundraises to provide these services to families from all walks of life, with 93% of families receiving free services. Wine, Women & Shoes will take place in support of Forty Carrots Family Center next year November 9 – 11, 2017. www.fortycarrots.org.

Photo: *Left to Right:* Bart Lowther (Soleman), Andrew Lundin (Soleman), Sally Schule (co-chair), Michelle Kapreilian (executive director), Thomas Doan (Soleman), Richard Lawrence (former board chair)

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