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Youth Guidance gala at Palmer House raises \$1 million

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Supporters gather at the Palmer House in Chicago for the 2018 Bright Futures Gala to support Becoming a Man, Working on Womanhood and other Youth Guidance programs. Youth Guidance officials say they pride themselves on meeting youth where they are at — physically, socially and emotionally. (Photo courtesy of Youth Guidance)

Supporters gathered at the Palmer House in Chicago recently for the 2018 Bright Futures Gala to celebrate the work of Youth Guidance and the formative journey of its youth.

The May 17 event raised \$1 million to support school-based programs for 11,000 youth.

Youth Guidance's programs include Becoming a Man, Working on Womanhood, Parent and Family Engagement, Project Prepare, and Extended Day & Enrichment.

Guests attending the night's festivities included Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, business executives, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, community leaders, and gala co-chairs Douglas K. Walker, and Paul C. and Diane H. Reilly.

One of the evening's most inspiration moments occurred when a Working on Womanhood participant shared her personal journey of challenges and overcoming obstacles with the help of the

evidence-based program. Both BAM and WOW aim to help youth channel negative energy into positive solutions.

Other highlights included the presentation of the Kurt L. Schultz Service Award to The Davee Foundation by Michelle Adler-Morrison, YG chief executive officer.

"With the community's support, we surpassed our goal and raised \$1 million, which will allow us to serve more of our children than ever before," Adler-Morrison said. "On behalf of Youth Guidance and our board Chairman John Raitt, we are so grateful to the people of the city of Chicago, our board of directors, the host committee, WOW and BAM advisory councils, the Junior Board and especially our corporate and public sector partners — all of which share our mission of guiding our youth to reach their full potential, to be their best selves. Thank you for helping us impact the lives of our youth."

The gala was emceed by NBC 5 Chicago anchor Zoraida Sambolin and offered auction items that included a Bears-Packers VIP weekend during the 100th anniversary of the rivalry game. The auction item was donated by Packers CEO Mark Murphy and his family.

Youth Guidance officials say they pride themselves on meeting youth where they are — physically within schools, socially and emotionally — to help them overcome obstacles and focus on their education. Funds raised will support the organization's mission and expansion of providing counseling, mentoring and after-school support to youth from under-resourced communities all across Chicago.