

Fleurish

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Ashley Leroy, Quincy Jones, Tim Shriver and model Jasmine

Photos by Glory Weisberg



Michelle Whitten and DeOndra Dixon



Stephanie Kramer



Greeters Laurin Gilmour, Alison Hrack, Casey Gunning and Ashley Van Bruwaene

Global Down Syndrome Jet Set Fashion Show set to net more than \$1.2M

By GLORY WEISBERG

The Global Down Syndrome Foundation *Be Beautiful Be Yourself Jet Set Fashion Show* was one magnificent fundraiser, catapulting it to the top echelon of Denver area events.

High profile guests accompanied Down Syndrome clients down a fashion runway that drew repeated applause after a whopper of a live auction led by developer **Peter Kudla**, a showman the likes of which isn't seen elsewhere in Colorado. Revving up the 1,200 guests to hotly bid on a spectacular array of trips and event tickets, Kudla donned hilarious outfits to keep the audience's rapt attention. Four of the 12 live auction items included trips on private jets to spots such as Los Angeles, New York City and Scottsdale and those alone raised at least \$83,000. The event was expected to clear (not gross) more than \$1.2 million.

John and Anna Sie started the Down Syndrome Foundation to support research into the condition and its medical and cognitive side

effects. Not only are they funding research, but the Sie's eight digit seed funds are also raising awareness into the wide ranging abilities these patients possess. Such education, of course, spurs financial support that the Sie's granddaughter, **Sophie Whitten**, may well benefit from as she grows up. Sophie's mom and the Sie's daughter, **Michelle Whitten**, is executive director of the Anna and John Sie Foundation.

Quincy Jones comes to town annually for the Jet Set Show and the Quincy Jones Exceptional Advocacy Award went to **Tim Shriver**, son of Eunice Kennedy Shriver, who started the Special Olympics. Shriver's every movement made it clear that the family's flair for public speaking is alive and well. We couldn't take our eyes off him as he spoke after receiving the award from Jones.

Other celebrities walking the red carpet included *Survivor* host **Jeff Probst**, actress **Stephanie Kramer**, Denver Nugget **Chauncey Billups**, former Denver Bronco **Ed McCaffrey** and **Jamie Fox**. From the excitement and repeated camera clicks and flashes made it look like a scene from *Entertainment Tonight*. In fact, that TV show's



Piper and Chauncey Billups



Bonnie and Peter Kudla

mobile TV camera did record the entire event.

The Quincy Jones Exceptional Advocacy Award for Self Advocate went to **Karen Gaffney**, a champion swimmer and public speaker, having made the English Channel swim in a three-woman relay. She also swam the length of Lake Tahoe.

Last year's Advocacy Award went to **DeOndra Dixon** who was in the spotlight again this year. Her outgoing, self-confident manner makes her a darling addition to the annual event.

Among the guests at fashion show ramp-side tables were **Larry and Carol Mizel**, Denver Mayor **John Hickenlooper**, **Norm and Sunny Brownstein**, and law part-

ner **Steve Farber** and his wife **Cindy**. **Don Kortz** gamely donned John Elway autographed pants to raise \$1,000 removing them on stage for the high bidder, patriotic undershorts were revealed, removed ramp-side, showing his own slacks. Nearby were **Bob and Kalleen Malone** and across the ramp were **Ernie and Sharon Magness Blake**. Others there: University of Denver Chancellor **Robert**

Coombe, Mike and Amber Fries, Tammy and Noel Cunningham, bankers **Donald and Susan Sturm**, florist **Paula Newberry Arnold**, Dr. **Roy and Suzanne Arkle Wilson, Lee and Debbie Alpert**, and **Ricki and Dave Rest**.

For information on the Global Down Syndrome Foundation, visit www.coloradojetset.com.

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Don Kortz shows off his patriotic underpants.



Jamie Fox