

Honoring The Incomparable Q

A Giver Of Gifts ... By Rosalind J. Harris



Quincy Jones accepts the Quincy Jones Exceptional Advocacy Award from the Global Down Syndrome Foundation at the *Be Beautiful Be Yourself Jet Set Fashion Show* as John J. Sie, Michelle Sie Whitten and Diondra Dixon (Jamie Foxx's sister) looks on. Photos by Bernard Grant

"Jack of all trades, master of all" should be used to describe musician, composer, producer and arranger, Quincy Jones, aka Q, who was recognized last month at the *Be Beautiful Be Yourself Jet Set Fashion Show*, benefiting the Linda Crnic Institute for Down Syndrome in Denver. Presented by the Global Down Syndrome Foundation, the Quincy Jones Exceptional Advocacy Award was established in his honor for his leadership and life-changing humanitarian work that has helped the disadvantaged, including the developmentally disabled.

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of identifying the genetic cause of Down syndrome, a sold out audience of 1,200 attended a star-studded fundraiser. Co-Chairs of the event included Anna and John J. Sie.

While recognized and working in his various fields, Jones was always giving back. He began his humanitar-

ian work in the 1960s but is must recognized for pioneering the historic "We Are The World" model using celebrities to raise money and awareness for a cause. His leadership – along with 46 other entertainers – in producing, conducting and recording the best-selling single of all time raised \$63 million for Ethiopian famine relief in 1985.

Jones has a deep passion for children, especially disadvantaged children. In 2007, he wrote the winning score for the closing ceremony of the Special Olympics. In 2008, he committed to being a spokesperson for the Linda Crnic Institute for Down Syndrome.

"I believe from the bottom of my heart that every child on this planet has something to offer mankind, and they can soar to the highest mountain tops if they are given the opportunity to do so," Jones said during his spokesperson announcement event in 2008. "I have no doubt that the Linda Crnic Institute will be the world's leading care center for those impacted by this affliction, and will provide an avenue for obtaining undeniable and

fundamentally civil rights for these beautiful children, so they can achieve everything they can imagine. And I am enthusiastically looking forward to working with the patrons of this institution to bring those goals to fruition in any way I can."

As a young child growing up on the mean streets of Chicago, Jones also experienced affliction in more ways than one – violence, gangs, and a life without a mother.

He grew up with Al Capone, John Dillinger, Salvatore "Momo" Giancana, Two Gun Pete, and the Jones Brothers, the most notorious Black gangsters during that time. Since his father worked for them, that way of life appeared normal and natural.

"We were in the heart of the ghetto in Chicago – the biggest Black ghetto in America and probably the spawning ground for every gangster, Black and white in America. We were around all of that every day. Two Gun Pete was a Black policeman, who used to shoot teenagers in the back every weekend. There was a gang on every street. Our biggest struggle was either running from gangs or with gangs."

At seven years old, Jones said he got his medals. "With a switchblade in hand, I was pinned to a tree with an ice pick," he said. "But, when you're young, nothing harms you, nothing scares you or anything. You don't know any better."

Even though he remembers his mother being taken to the Manteno State Hospital for Dementia, Jones proudly says she was smart, attended Boston University in the '20s and spoke 12 languages.

At the age of 11, Jones was spending days burning down event halls, stealing honey and pies and having pie fights. After using sling shots and BB guns, he said let's get real and while selling papers at the army camp, he would take daily, piece by piece, artillery in his bag. Eventually, he and the other baby gangsters would possess four 30-caliber machine guns and enough ammunition to start a war.

Those pie fights ended along with the machine gun toting ventures when something caught his eye and forever changed the course of his life. After breaking into the superintendent's

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