

## Highlights from the 2010 Jazz Brunch & Silent Auction

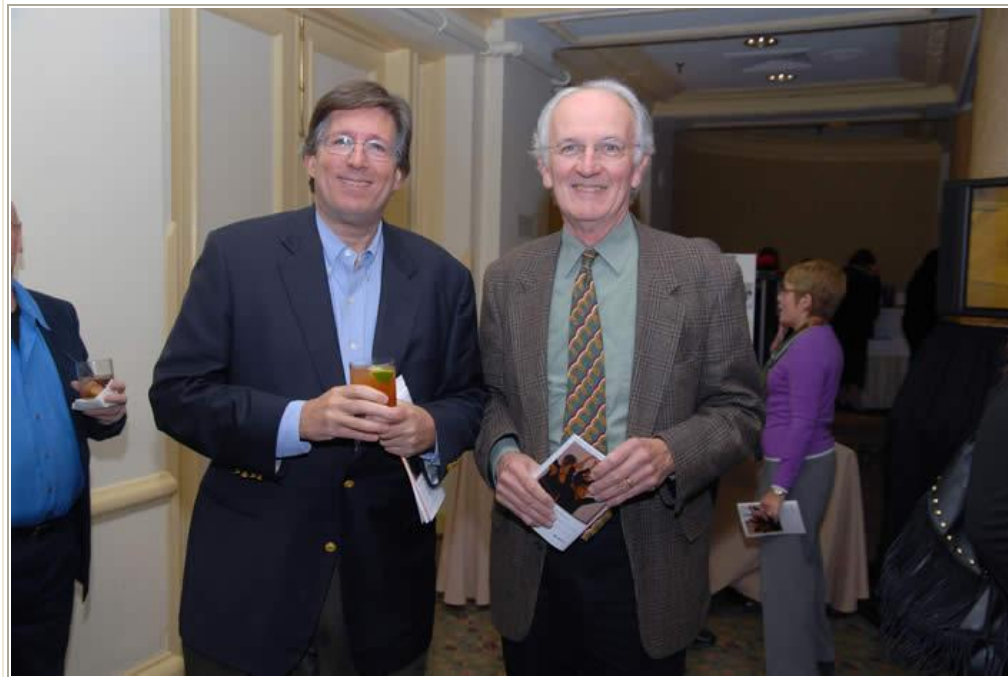
It's 11:30 am Sunday, November 7th. A cold front has gathered a massive line of warm bodies to the foyer of the Grand Ballroom of the Hyatt at the Bellevue. Art-Reach's 19th Annual Jazz Brunch and Silent Auction has attracted almost 300 guests in support of its mission to enriching the lives of underserved communities through art and cultural experiences. While exchanging names for bid numbers, patrons were transported back in time by the sweet sounds of the 11-piece [John Hoey Orchestra](#). No strangers to working with Art-Reach, or the Bellevue for that matter, band leader John Hoey described the day's experience as "a pleasure, one of the best gigs we do." Even the first-time Brunch performers from [Lindy and Blues](#) and [Philly Lindy Hop](#) were nothing short of amazing dancing the shim-sham, a traditional swing dance, across the floor. Having gained some substantial exposure, the dance ensemble declared that they would be nothing more than ecstatic to partner up with Art-Reach again in the future.



[Lindy and Blues](#) and [Philly Lindy Hop](#) showing off their swingin' moves.

And it's this intense desire and dedication to be involved with the organization that speaks volumes. With 18 years already under its belt the Jazz Brunch has a substantial following that keeps growing. Arts Partners and Board Members alike bring their friends and family knowing that this is the place to be on a Sunday. It has definitely become a sort of who's who of the art, social service and corporate sectors. Presenting Sponsor [PECO](#) and other sponsors like [SCA](#), [PREIT](#), and [Shire Pharmaceuticals](#) were in attendance. But it was also guests like Varissa McMickens, director of an organization called [ArtsRising](#), who help to bring home the importance of the event. Having travelled all the way from California to be there she mentioned how great the auction was but emphasized that it was the love and support for each other that she

found most endearing. She explained that in these tough economic times to have this tremendous outsourcing of love and loyalty for the arts is paramount to raising a better quality of life.



Harvey Swedloff and Steve Heumann

Art-Reach's Executive Director Michael Norris understands this and opened the awards ceremony with a series of acknowledgements and thanks. He recognized the many players involved with making this fundraiser possible, from the 30+ volunteers to the donors. He highlighted Ambassador of the Year Susan Paschkes for her service in the organization. But the outpouring of gratitude doesn't stop there. An important aspect of the Brunch is presenting Commitment to Cultural Excellence Awards to an individual and an organization who share in Art Reach's mission to provide arts and cultural opportunities to underserved groups. This year's recipients included organizational honoree Bancroft and individual honoree Jean Canfield, PNC Bank's Senior Vice President/ Director of Client and Community Relations.



Jeff Gordon, Jean Canfield, and Michael Norris

Introduced by [NBC 10](#) news anchor Dawn Timmeney, Bancroft received the first award of the afternoon for their ongoing commitment to providing arts opportunities to their clients, individuals with cognitive disabilities. In an interview following her speech, [Bancroft](#) President and Chief Executive Toni Pergolin, when asked how she felt about the organization being honored today said, “it’s so energizing... [Art-Reach] is an organization that inspires. It allows you to think in different ways. I’m leaving having been inspired.” Plans to work on even more programs with Art-Reach seem to be the goal for Pergolin and her team in the future. Up next, Jeff Gordon, Manager of Corporate Relations at [PECO](#) (this year’s presenting sponsor) presented the award to Jean Canfield. With a career spanning more than 30 years at [PNC Bank](#), Canfield told the audience that she felt both flattered and embarrassed to receive such respect from her peers. She emphatically mentioned that at PNC, “it’s all about the team. I couldn’t have done it without them.” When discussing future involvement with Art-Reach, Canfield went on to say “with initiatives like PNC Arts Alive our commitment to the arts will never waiver.”



Toni Pergolin, Dawn Timmeney, and Michael Norris

But for many of the Jazz Brunch guests, the moment of involvement began with a simple bid. “One of things I look for in determining whether our fundraiser is a success is the buzz that surrounds it” says Brunch Committee and Board of Directors Co-Chair Karen Feeney. “What are people talking about as they walk around the room? What donations are causing the most excitement?” According to an informal poll of volunteers, the Tuscan villa seemed to be all the rage. First-timers Mary Mulligan and her husband were among the many who agreed. “I wonder who won the trip. I probably would have put my name on the list if the package included more people.” The couple didn’t walk away empty handed though, winning both a spa package, an ice-cream party basket and four tickets to Disney on Ice. The Mulligans and others remarked on having a wonderful time and enjoying the company of good genuine people.



Development Manager Rachel Robbins assists brunch guests with auction check-out

As the event draws to a close, “see you next year” and “Goodbye “ echo down the hallway. Staff and committee members shake hands feeling excited to have possibly surpassed their goals for the fundraiser (which, we found out later, they did!). Auction winners carry away big smiles accompanied with large black [PNC Arts Alive](#) bags. They know they competed today for a good cause and that the real winners are the communities Art-Reach serves.

Philanthropy at its finest, this year’s theme and event filled with good food and music, a generous crowd and great cause could only be described in one word...Swingtastic!

By Folami Islam

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