

[November 5, 2012](#)

## Fight Night and Knock Out Abuse Galas Beef Up Auction, Sponsors



André Wells created an entryway to the event space reminiscent of the Moulin Rouge's signature windmill and red signage. *Photo: Davide De Pas Pictures*

By *D. Channing Muller* | Posted November 5, 2012, 6:05 PM EST

**WASHINGTON** Fight for Children and Knock Out Abuse held their simultaneous annual galas again on Thursday night at the [Washington Hilton](#) and [Ritz-Carlton, Washington D.C.](#) respectively. Fight Night drew nearly 1,800 men—and a few ladies—for the first event since founder Joe Roberts passed away in December 2011. Organizers viewed the night as a growing year with a special tribute video to Roberts, which reemphasized the annual fund-raiser's mission of providing quality education to the metro area's children no matter their economic level.

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In keeping on message, marketing and event manager Kristen Fagley increased the production surrounding the live auction this year. “We’ve tried to create more entertainment to get people’s attention before we start the bidding to hopefully raise more money,” Fagley said.

Prior to announcing the first item—a trip to the Academi training facility in North Carolina—the lights went down, helicopter sounds began blaring, and entertainers dressed as soldiers made their way to the stage. The fanfare helped sell three of the trip packages for a total of \$120,000. Overall the live auction raised \$239,000, about \$81,000 more than last year. Following that, the M.C. hosted a call-to-action donation for the first time, drawing in nearly \$20,000 in additional donations for Joe’s Champs, a new Fight for Children program in honor of founder Joe Roberts. In total, the night brought in \$2.2 million—up \$200,000 from last year.

Over at the Ritz-Carlton, the women-dominated Knock Out Abuse gala—attended by many of the spouses and significant others of the Fight Night attendees—also saw an increase in its bottom line with the addition of 35 new sponsors, such as Saks Fifth Avenue and General Motors Company, bringing the total to 68 this year compared to 47 in 2011. Organization co-founder Cheryl Masri credits the presidential campaign and local news coverage with the increased exposure to the effect of domestic violence on women and children.

“People are more aware [of our cause] and probably because the campaign, both sides, has made everyone more aware of women’s issues,” said Masri. “There has been a lot in the news this past year about a number of murder cases that are caused by domestic violence, and the men and women in our community are more aware of the needs of those affected.”

Designed by [Events by Andre Wells](#), the sold-out Moulin Rouge-themed soiree of 650 raised \$660,000 overall this year, an increase by \$100,000 compared to 2011, from ticket sales and silent and live auctions.

After Fight Night’s final boxing match and the women’s dinner completed, the two parties joined together at the Ritz-Carlton for the combined after-party with special entertainment by Doug E. Fresh.

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