

Financial Standard
Monday 15/03/2010

Page: 22
 Section: General News
 Region: National, AU
 Circulation: 10257
 Type: Magazines Business
 Size: 1,664.69 sq.cms.



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Financial Standard | Volume 8 Number 4 | 15 March 2010

FICAP's School of Rock



For one night only, finance executives channeled their inner rockstar in the name of charity. RAINMAKERiTV captures the event's highlights.



PAUL DE LAROCHE, BT INSURANCE
 2010 FICAP ROCKSTAR

Two Sydney-based children's charities have found themselves an unusual ally: finance professionals who love rock 'n' roll.

That's the premise behind a yearly fundraiser hosted by the Financial Industry Community Aid Program (FICAP), a non-profit group run by volunteers, all of whom work in the industry.

Instead of the usual black-tie dinner, FICAP hosted 'Who Wants to be a Rockstar?', a band competition that aimed to showcase the musical talents of industry professionals while raising money for charity.

Marnie McLaren, FICAP chair and national manager in fund management governance at BT Financial Group, said the event is one of those rare occasions where everyone who normally compete with each other – dealer groups, fund managers, financial planners and banks – cast their differences aside for a common cause.

"Normally a function will be run by a particular fund in the industry, whereas this is attended by research houses and

financial planners and all the major banks and insurers," she said in a previous *Financial Standard* interview.

McLaren said this year turned out to be their most successful event yet with donations topping \$133,000, thanks to corporate sponsors and proceeds from the raffle draw and auction.

"It was just fantastic. We've raised more than we've ever done in the previous three years and that speaks volumes about the support we've received from the industry," she said.

Doing it for the kids

The event's proceeds will go towards two charities: Bear Cottage, one of only two hospices for children on palliative care in the country, and the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF), a children's safety and welfare group.

ACF will receive some 30 per cent of this year's donations as the secondary charity, having been the primary charity last year and receiving 70 per cent of the proceeds.

Meanwhile, Bear Cottage receives 70 per cent of this year's donations and following FICAP's program of supporting a charity for two consecutive years, will receive 30 per cent next year.

This means in 2011, Bear Cottage will be the secondary charity and FICAP will select a new primary non-profit organisation to support.

"Because these charities don't get government funding, we don't want to write a cheque one year and then have them worry about the following year. This helps them from a budgeting perspective," she said.

Brooke Partington, fundraising manager at Bear Cottage, said FICAP's assistance will go towards helping at least more than a dozen families to stay at the hospice for a week at no cost, an extraordinary feat that makes FICAP their most generous donor for the financial year.

"What they've done is extraordinary. We are 100 per cent community-funded so we are entirely dependent on fundraising [like FICAP's] to keep us going," she said.



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To date, FICAP has raised more than \$430,000 and helped ACF, Life Changing Experiences Foundation (LCEF) and Young Care.

"We haven't decided yet on the [primary] charity for next year but we look at those that focus on youth and young people and tend not to have a lot of government support," said McLaren.

Let me entertain you

So one balmy Sydney night, in an upscale waterfront bar called The Loft on King Street Wharf, 15 investment professionals strode across a makeshift stage and gave

it their best shot to become the 2010 FICAP RockStar.

This was no glorified karaoke night. Each and every contestant practiced with their accompanying band ahead of the event and entertained the attendees with solid renditions of hit classics such as Oasis' *Don't Look Back*, Reef's *Place Your Hands* and Lynrd Skynrd's *Sweet Home Alabama*.

Paul De Laroche from BT Insurance took the trophy home for his cover of Pearl Jam's *Better Man*. De Laroche was a last minute entrant after the original singer pulled out due to illness.

Adam Coughlan and Mark Thomas (from van Eyk) got the Encouragement Award for their rendition of Bon Jovi's *It's My Life*.

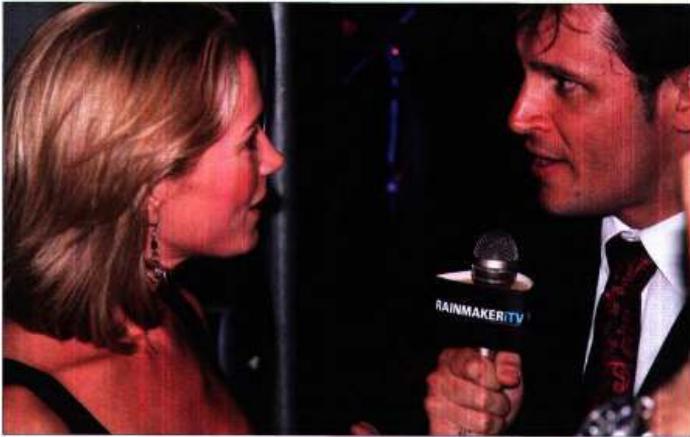
But the ultimate winners were the charities, after the night's auction and raffle draw helped tip the scale, making 2010 FICAP's most supported event since 2006.

Credit also goes to the 10-person team who volunteered their time and efforts namely: Rachel Griffith from Count Financial Limited; David Raits from Outlook Financial Solutions; Chris Larsen from Ironbark Asset Management; Paul Barrett from Colonial First State; Justin

Greiner from ANZ Private Bank; Jackie Boylan from BT Financial Group; Tim Bradbury from Barclays Capital; Helen Blackford at CFS; and Michelle Chaperon from Deutsche Bank.

McLaren said the team will be meeting up again in a few weeks' time to start prepping for next year, which leaves them little time to recover from the event just gone by. But hey, she's not complaining. To borrow a famous catchphrase, they are ready to rock and roll.

For more information, visit www.ficap.com.au. Video highlights are available on www.rainmakeritv.com. ●



IAIN McDONALD, ITV PRESENTER, INTERVIEWING ONE OF THE ATTENDEES



BEAR COTTAGE CHARITY TEAM



MARNIE MCLAREN, FICAP CHAIR



GEOFF LLOYD, FICAP PATRON



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