



UNITED FRESH START FOUNDATION

NEWS RELEASE – For Immediate Release

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Produce Industry Raises \$100K For Kids

United Fresh Start Foundation's First Annual Gala Dinner & Fundraising Auction

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 23, 2018) – Last week, hundreds of produce industry leaders gathered at the Rancho Bernardo Inn in San Diego for the first annual United Fresh Start Foundation Conference & Gala Dinner. The “Bids for Kids” fundraising auction raised \$100,000 on Tuesday evening following the annual fundraising golf tournament, advancing the foundation’s mission of increasing children’s access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

“I’m overwhelmed by the generosity of those who participated in the first annual ‘Bids for Kids’ fundraising auction,” said Phil Muir, President & CEO, Muir Copper Canyon Farms and Chairman of the United Fresh Start Foundation Board of Trustees. “The success of this year’s event will allow the Foundation to focus on how we can fundamentally change the way the next generation connects with fresh produce from their earliest years to become lifelong consumers,”

The Rancho Bernardo Inn served as the ideal setting for the Foundation’s most successful golf tournament to date, attracting a record-number of retail and foodservice buyers and industry executives eager to take advantage of the sunny San Diego weather.

Following the golf tournament, United Fresh honored recently retired Hugh Topper, the former Group Vice President of Fresh Foods for H-E-B Grocery Company, with the Lifetime Achievement Award during the Foundation’s Gala Dinner. Hugh spent over 26 years at H-E-B building a solid foundation for the company in fresh produce and fresh foods.

“This is truly an important cause and the foundation is doing good work, so it’s something we should easily be able to get behind with much support,” said Jeff Cady, Director of Produce & Floral, Tops Friendly Markets and United Fresh Board Member.

The event concluded on Wednesday morning with a 3-hour conference where attendees left inspired after hearing from industry experts on how they can continue to build the foundation’s core mission areas in schools, in communities, and in their businesses.

“The whole event was an inspiring reminder that we feed people,” said Joan Daleo, President, Ole Tyme Produce, Inc. “Through the work of the Foundation, we will be able to have a greater impact in our businesses and communities – reaching more kids than ever before!”

The public also can add their own support to the United Fresh Start Foundation by making a [100 percent tax deductible donation](#), ensuring kids everywhere are *Growing Up Fresh*.

Visit www.unitedfreshstart.org or contact Kate Olender, United Fresh Senior Director, Health & Wellness, at kolender@unitedfresh.org for more information on how to support the Foundation.

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About United Fresh Start Foundation

The United Fresh Start Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization focused exclusively on increasing children's access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Affiliated with the United Fresh Produce Association, the Foundation is committed to helping today's kids achieve the public health goal to make half their plate fruits and vegetables to live longer, healthier lives. The Foundation works to create an environment in which kids have easy access to high-quality, great-tasting and affordable fresh fruits and vegetables, whenever and wherever they are choosing snacks or a meal. More information at: www.unitedfreshstart.org.