



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **SB Museum of Natural History Hosts Annual Mission Creek Gala Raising \$651,000**

**SANTA BARBARA, CA**— The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History’s annual Mission Creek Gala: Mineral Masquerade took place Saturday, April 13. Two hundred and ten guests enjoyed a lovely reception in the Museum’s Bird Habitat, Bird Diversity, and Mineral Halls that included interactive stations manned by teens from the Quasars to Sea Stars program. The Rock On signature cocktail along with tasty bites from duo catering made for an enchanting cocktail party.

Guests made their way into Fleischmann Auditorium for the big décor reveal and dinner. The Auditorium was transformed to look like guests were in a quartz mine. The décor was designed by Joy Full Events, Inc., Hogue & Co, and the Museum’s creative exhibits team led by Melinda Morgan-Stowell. There were five specially themed tables that represented minerals. The Gold tableau, the Silver tableau, the Amethyst Quartz tableau, the Copper tableau, and the Malachite tableau were each generously sponsored and were uniquely designed to reflect the theme.

Museum Board Chair Salvatore Milazzo welcomed guests and kicked off the five-course dinner which included a course with a delicious liquid sphere made through reverse spherification featuring Chamomile Gin. Education Director Rosina Garcia shared details about what happens at the Museum and Sea Center during school programs. After dinner Teen Programs intern Melayah Terrell spoke passionately about why the Museum is so important. Museum President & CEO Luke J. Swetland made an appeal to the crowd and quickly raised \$295,000.

Duo events provided the delicious dinner and 15 Napa Valley, Sonoma County, Santa Cruz Mountains, Santa Barbara County and Oregon wineries donated the wine for the evening. The sold-out event was a huge success for the Museum raising a record-breaking \$651,000 in total. The night ended with guests visiting the newly renovated Mineral Hall for a late-night bite. The Gala Honorary Committee consisted of Stacey Byers, Sheri Eckmann, Venesa Faciane, Heather Hambleton, Ken Kelly, Amanda Lee, Bobbie Kinnear, Karen Nicholson, and Susan Parker.

SANTA BARBARA  
**MUSEUM**  
*of*  
**NATURAL  
HISTORY**

The Museum aims to spark curiosity and ignite a passion for nature and maintains a commitment to providing exceptional educational programs for the Santa Barbara community. The Mission Creek Gala sustains the Museum's outstanding nature and science education programs which touch the lives of more than 10,000 school children each year through school tours, classes, storytelling, camps, the Nature Collection lending library, and outreach at the Mission Canyon campus and Sea Center. The annual Gala has raised more than seven million dollars for school programs since it began in 2000. The Museum Access Fund (MAF) is a scholarship program provided by the Museum to visiting school groups in need of financial assistance. Schools with a 50% or greater enrollment in the federal Free or Reduced-Price Meal Program may apply for scholarships through the MAF application. This fund was created to provide access to the Museum programs for low-income schools. Donations also enable us to provide programs at a reduced class rate to those schools which do not qualify for the MAF. Funds raised by the Museum's annual Gala enable us to offer these reduced/waived fees.

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### **About the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History**

*Inspiring curiosity for over 100 years.* Founded in 1916, the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History inspires a thirst for discovery and a passion for the natural world. The Museum seeks to connect people to nature for the betterment of both, and prides itself on being *naturally different*. For more information, visit [sbnature.org](http://sbnature.org).



**Museum Board Chair Tory Milazzo and his wife Kelly.**



**Fleischmann Auditorium was transformed to look like a mine.**



**Ken and Elisa Kelly and John and Deneen Demourkas with their guests in the Amethyst Quartz tableau.**



**Table host Nancy Martz and her guests.**



**Director of Education Rosina Garcia sharing details about the Museum's education programs.**



**Allison and Pierre LaBarge.**